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Fighting on the home front, by KATE ADIE

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THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

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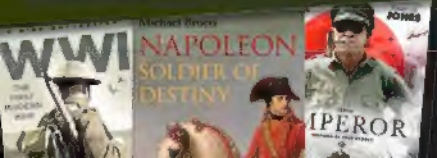

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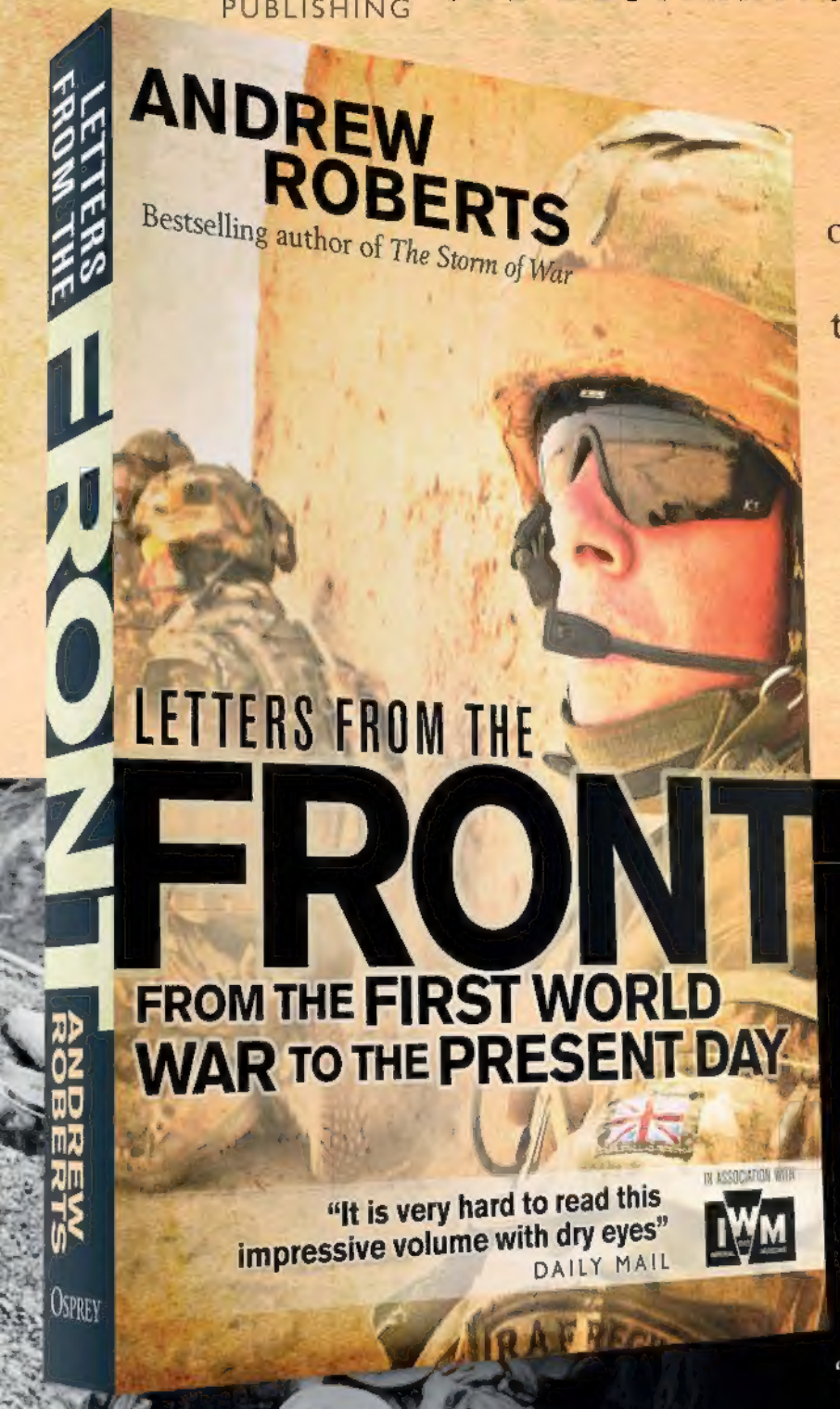

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HISTORY of WAR

Welcome

In 1968, things were going badly for the North Vietnamese. Ho Chi Minh was becoming increasingly ill and the southern forces, aided by the Americans, appeared to have the upper hand in their war against the communists. Then, the game-changer. Pouring out from the jungle, the NVA and Viet Cong attacked the cities of the south, engaging in an urban attack aimed at destroying US bases and breaking the back of the southern resistance. The Tet Offensive, so called because it started on the day of the Tet (new year's) holiday, was ultimately doomed to fail; but it also proved a success, for it marked a turning point in the war that would eventually be won by the north. Read our lead feature about this remarkable endeavour on page 18.

And when you're done, take time to enjoy the rest of issue three – there's simply too much in it to list here, so turn the page to digest its full contents.

Paul Pettengale *Editorial Director*
paul.pettengale@anthem-publishing.com

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historyofwar.co.uk

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Contributors

KATE ADIE
Once the Chief News Correspondent for the BBC, Kate is one of the world's most high-profile journalists, having reported from war zones across the globe. In this issue, she writes about the role of women during the First World War (page 32).

ANDREW WIEST
Being the Founding Director of the Centre of the Study of War and Society at the University of Southern Mississippi, Andrew has written widely about many of the world's conflicts. In this issue, he considers the Tet Offensive during the war in Vietnam (page 18).

STEVE JARRATT
A renowned magazine journalist and editor, Steve has been busy this month. He's written a piece on the fall of Yugoslavia (page 60) and looks back at the first time the Russians invaded the Crimean Peninsula, during the 19th Century (page 42).

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South Vietnamese troops engage in urban conflict during the 1968 Tet Offensive

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HISTORY of WAR

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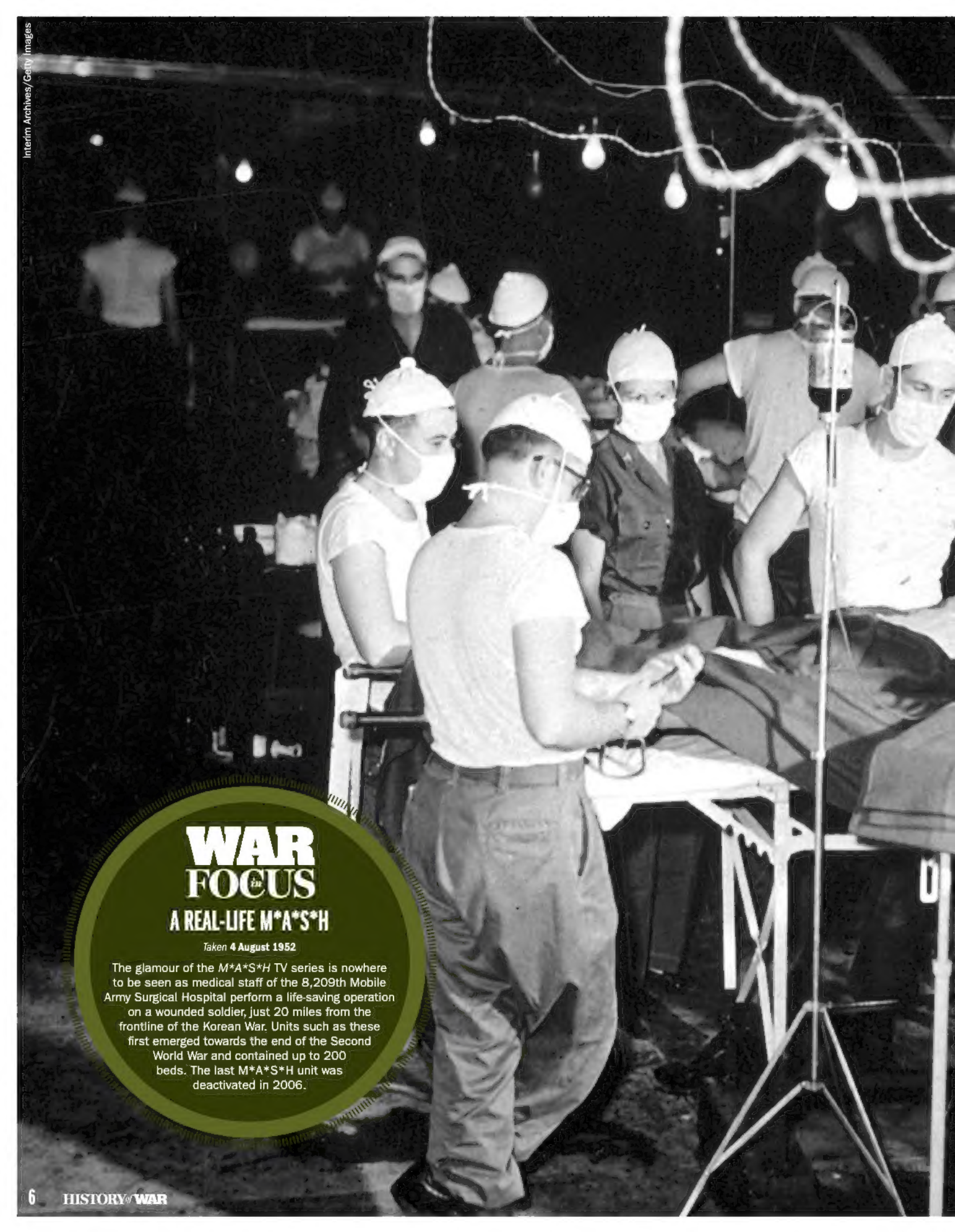


Interim Archives/Getty Images

WAR IN FOCUS

A REAL-LIFE M*A*S*H

Taken **4 August 1952**

The glamour of the *M*A*S*H* TV series is nowhere to be seen as medical staff of the 8,209th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital perform a life-saving operation on a wounded soldier, just 20 miles from the frontline of the Korean War. Units such as these first emerged towards the end of the Second World War and contained up to 200 beds. The last M*A*S*H unit was deactivated in 2006.

Rex Features

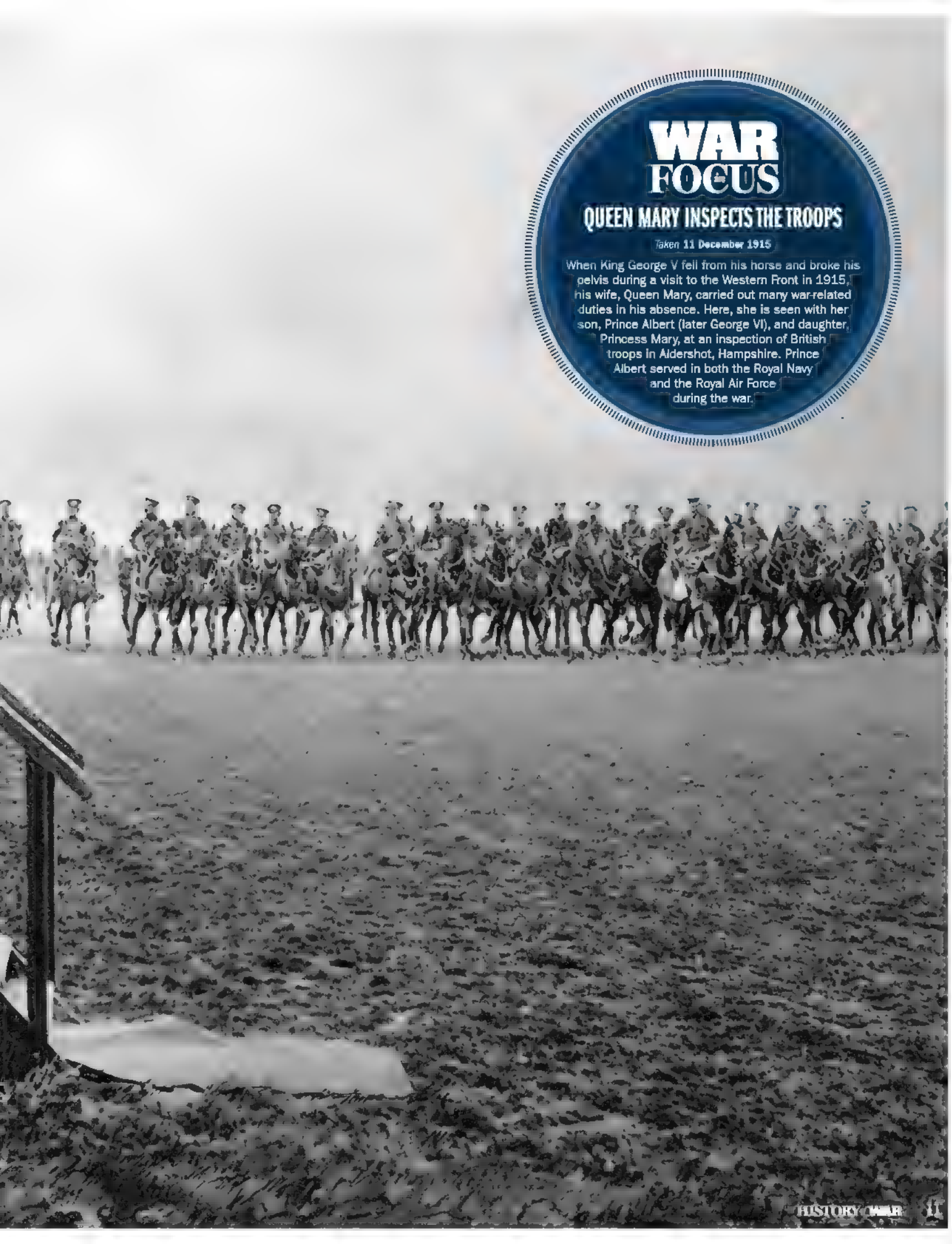
WAR in FOCUS

ISRAELI MISSILE ATTACK ON GAZA CITY

Taken **15 January 2009**

At first glance, it looks like a spectacular fireworks display, but these pyrotechnics were far more deadly. The Gaza War between Israel and Palestinian militants had already seen two weeks of tit-for-tat bombing attacks when Israel launched its latest assault on Gaza City. Air strikes on this day killed Hamas' Interior Minister Said Seyam, and by the end of the three-week war, some 1,500 people had lost their lives.

Mary Evans



WAR FOCUS

QUEEN MARY INSPECTS THE TROOPS

Taken **11 December 1915**

When King George V fell from his horse and broke his pelvis during a visit to the Western Front in 1915, his wife, Queen Mary, carried out many war-related duties in his absence. Here, she is seen with her son, Prince Albert (later George VI), and daughter, Princess Mary, at an inspection of British troops in Aldershot, Hampshire. Prince Albert served in both the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force during the war.

DISPATCHES

Military news and opinion from around the globe, including a woman's astonishing discovery in her garden, First World War troops found in an Italian ski resort, and animals used as spies!

WOMAN DISCOVERS FIRST WORLD WAR TRENCH IN HER BACK GARDEN

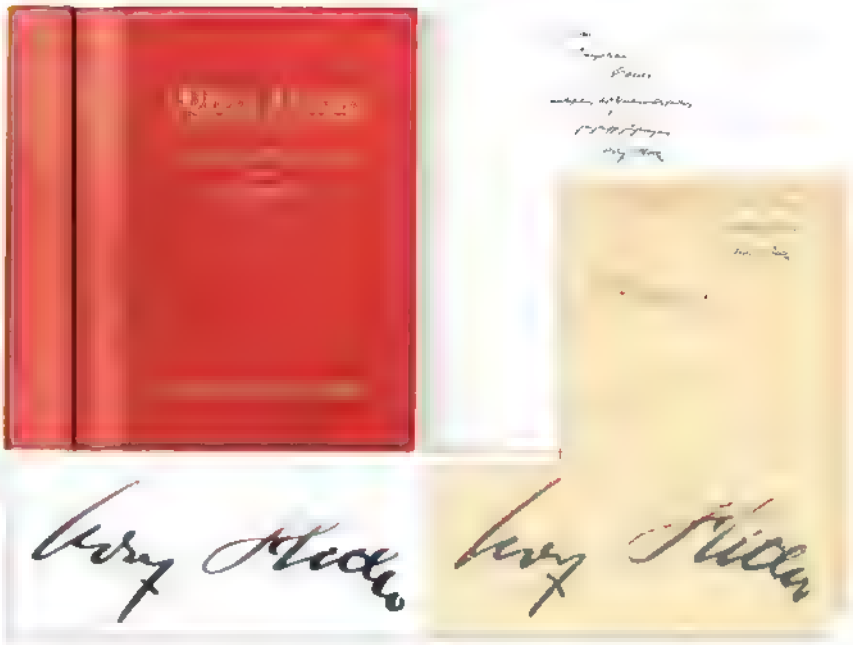
Rundown home in France comes with a staggering "bonus"

The next time you go digging in your back garden, you're doing well to find artefacts of historical importance – but Avril Williams of Auchonvillers in northern France got a whole lot more than she could possibly have bargained for.

The expat bought a rundown property in the area with the intention of providing a home for herself and her two children that she could one day turn into a guesthouse. But she did not expect to find herself excavating a First World War trench that lay beneath her garden, along with memorabilia from the Battle of the Somme in 1916.

Ever the optimist, she embraced the challenge and restored the site with the help of archaeological volunteers, and she now works as a tour guide for anybody who wishes to stay in her guesthouse and witness the trench for themselves. One of the volunteers who helped with the project, and regularly helps to maintain it, claims that it's well worth a visit and that "Avril's knowledge is outstanding".

Auchonvillers was decimated during the First World War and the trench left behind in Avril's garden not only leads into a cellar that was used as a dressing station during the conflict, but also serves as a haunting reminder of the conditions of soldiers during the Battle of the Somme, which saw more than a million men wounded or killed.



Nate D Sanders Auctions

Signed copy of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* fetches $64,850 at auction

What would you pay for one of the most famous books in history? When it come's to Hitler's book, *Mein Kampf*, it would appear someone is willing to pay a lot. Recently sold at auction, an autographed two-volume set of his Nazi manifesto was snapped up in Los Angeles for $64,850 (£38,700), with the artefact going to an anonymous buyer.

The Führer had personally inscribed the cloth-bound volumes, one of which was a First Edition and the other of which was sent by him to Josef Bauer, an early Nazi Party member and SS Officer. Bids began at $20,000 (£12,000), with 11 received in total.

Mein Kampf was written by Hitler while he was in jail for his role in the failed Putsch attempt of 1923. In it, he outlines his political ideology and plans for Germany.

Auctioneer Nate Sanders, who identifies as Jewish, stated, "I think [the book] is very heinous. But it's an auction item, it's a memento and it's a piece of history."

FIRST WORLD WAR SOLDIERS UNCOVERED IN ITALIAN GLACIERS

Frozen remains of fallen Austrian troops exposed at popular ski resort

Thousands of First World War soldiers are still registered as missing, but the figure is set to decrease slightly following the discovery of the frozen remains of two Austrian troops in the Italian ski resort of Pelo.

Now popular with middle-class Italians and Russian tourists, Pelo was once a stone's throw from where the little-known White War was fought between Italy and Austria in 1915. The battle took place at an altitude of 6,500 feet, where temperatures can reach -30C. However, the melting of the glaciers here in recent decades has revealed the mummified remains of two teenage Austrian soldiers, who were found with bulletholes in their skulls.

Franco Nicolis of the Archaeological Heritage Office said, "They've come out of the ice just as they went in. In all likelihood, the soldiers' mothers never discovered their sons' fate." More than 80 soldiers who fell in the White War have been discovered in recent decades.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY EVENT FOCUSES ON THE HUMAN SIDE OF THE WAR

EXHIBITION INCLUDES DIARIES AND POSTCARDS

An exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery in London is honouring the centenary of the start of the First World War by shedding new light on life during the conflict.

Instead of concentrating on the military aspect of the war, *The Great War In Portraits* (until 15 June) will focus on the human side. Using films, photographs, diaries, letters and sketches, it will look at the radically different roles, experiences and, ultimately, destinies of those caught up in the crisis, as well as looking at the skills of plastic surgeons who were faced with the task of repairing terrible damage to fallen soldiers. There will also be a critical examination of some of the most influential and controversial military leaders in the war, including Blumer, Foch, Haig and Hindenburg.

Sandy Nairne, director of the gallery, said the exhibition includes "a very exquisite portrait of the Archduke Ferdinand", the assassination of whom precipitated the war. There is also a collection of postcards that were sent from soldiers on the frontline to their nearest and dearest at home

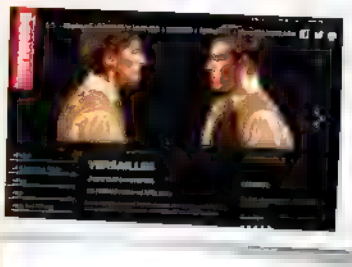
News in Brief

VISIT A FIRST WORLD WAR TRENCH IN THE HEART OF SHROPSHIRE!

Ever wanted to know what life was like in the trenches? In August, Park Hall in Shropshire is offering you the chance to find out – its Trenches Through The Ages Centre will allow people to "explore frontline trenches, complete with machine-gun posts". Park Hall was the site of one of the largest Great War training camps in the country, with some 14,000 troops stationed in nearby Shrewsbury.

RECENT FLOODING REVEALS LOST TREASURES OF WAR

While many have been devastated by the flooding that's blighted Britain in recent months, there's some good news for military fans, as record numbers of wartime bombs have been unearthed in South West England, including a rare First World War German mine found on a beach near Newquay. Since mid-December, the Royal Navy's Southern Dive Unit has recovered 244 items, compared to 108 in the same period last year.



LONDON STAGES COMMEMORATE THE FIRST WORLD WAR

London theatre has taken advantage of the centenary year of the start of the First World War by showcasing numerous plays, including *Oh, What a Lovely War!* at the Theatre Royal Stratford East, and *Versailles* at the Donmar Warehouse in Covent Garden.

CHATSWORTH TO MARK CENTENARY

A new exhibition is set to open at Chatsworth House in Derbyshire, with various objects, photos and stories providing a glimpse into what life was like during both World Wars. Curator Hannah Obee, who's spent a year planning the exhibition, enthused, "It's really coming together now."

MILITARY ENTHUSIAST IS CLOSE TO ACHIEVING HIS VISITOR-CENTRE DREAM

Kev Smith has spent two years searching the Cambridgeshire and Suffolk countryside for the perfect location for his planned First World War visitor centre, and has finally found one in Hawstead. He intends to create an extensive trench network complete with a shop, a café and a picnic area. Said Smith, "We want to create a safe resource that will both educate and inspire adults and children." The first phase of the centre is due to open next spring.

"BATTLEFIELD" DISCOVERED IN HAMPSHIRE IS A REMNANT OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

SOLDIERS TRAINED IN ITS ELABORATE TRENCH NETWORK BEFORE BEING SHIPPED TO THE WAR ZONES OF EUROPE

When a team of archaeologists were studying an aerial photograph from 1951, they were shocked to discover what looked like an elaborate trench network stretched across the land below. Sure enough, it turned out to be a mock battlefield that was used for training purposes during the Great War.

The land, still owned by the Ministry of Defence, was used to get soldiers battle-ready before they were shipped across the Channel to fight in the heart of the war zone. Amazingly, it's still intact to this day, complete with frontline and reserve trenches.

Rob Harper, Conservation Officer at Gosport Council, said, "I was completely astonished at what I was seeing. I have seven relatives buried in war graves on the front, who could well have trained here."

Although many other similar training sites have been discovered in Britain in the past, the scale and state of preservation at the Gosport site is astounding. Historian Dan Snow added, "This proves that it wasn't just about rounding up young men and hurling them at the machine guns: they were being incredibly well trained."

Google Earth

AMAZINGLY, THE TRAINING GROUND IS STILL INTACT TO THIS DAY, COMPLETE WITH A FRONTLINE AND RESERVE TRENCHES

ARE YOU DESCENDED FROM A VIKING?

Have you ever felt the need to wear a horned helmet and sail in a longship? There may be a good reason – according to a new study, around one million Britons can trace their DNA to the Vikings! Twenty-nine per cent of men in the Shetlands tested positive for Viking blood, while one in 33 men across the UK were found to be a direct match.

The highest concentration of descendants is to be found in Scotland, with the number decreasing the further south you go. Researchers compared Y-chromosome markers – inherited from father to son – in more than 3,500 men to six DNA patterns rarely found outside the Norse warriors' native Norway and Sweden. Dr Jim Wilson, a scientist at Britain's DNA, said, "Despite arriving well over a thousand years ago, the Vikings' legacy remains strong in Britain."

For just £200, you can find out if you have any Viking blood in you. For further details, visit www.britainsdna.com.

Shutterstock

First World War images recovered from bonfire

They should never have been taken in the first place, as British soldiers were banned from carrying cameras on the battlefield. But nevertheless, a collection of photographs taken of troops during the First World War have been rescued just as they were about to be thrown onto a bonfire.

The pictures, discovered by historian Jon Cooksey, were taken on the frontlines of Belgium and France in 1915 by Captain Harry Colver, and demonstrate the savage nature of warfare and the cramped living conditions of the trenches. More poignantly, though, they reveal the disturbing condition of the soldiers as they became more and more emotionally drained over time.

The images can be seen at www.express.co.uk/news/world-war-1/464068/Forbidden-World-War-1-images-saved-from-a-bonfire.

Shutterstock

Mary Evans

DID CLIMATE CHANGE CONTRIBUTE TO GENGHIS KHAN'S MILITARY CONQUESTS?

Mongolian leader may have been helped by weather

As one of history's most feared tyrants, Genghis Khan conquered most of Asia and eastern Europe to form the largest continuous land empire the world has ever known.

But, while his military skills cannot be doubted, a new study suggests that the commander might have partly owed his success to a sudden shift in climate: from the cold, arid period that immediately preceded his ascent to leader of the Mongol empire, to the warmer, wetter weather that allowed him to expand out from central Asia.

Tom Baerwald, a program director for the study, claimed, "Through a careful analysis of tree-ring records spanning 11 centuries, our researchers have provided valuable information about a period of great significance."

Dr Amy Hessel of West Virginia University added, "[The climate change] must have created the ideal conditions for a charismatic leader to emerge out of the chaos. Unusual moisture creates unusual plant activity, and that translates into horsepower. Genghis was literally able to ride that wave."

Each Mongolian horseman in Khan's army is said to have had up to five horses, which provided a supply of meat as well as transport. Higher grass yields and more productive pastures would have also caused a boom in camels, yaks and other livestock, providing the horsemen with the fuel they required to continue their leader's dominance into China, Afghanistan and Russia.

In recent decades, Mongolia's climate has been changing faster than that of other parts of the globe, with temperatures in some parts of the country rising by as much as 15°C over the past four decades. Perhaps it's time for the rise of a new conqueror?

THREE ANIMALS SUSPECTED OF BEING SPIES IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

We all wish our beloved pets could talk, but not if it means they end up communicating with the enemy in times of conflict. That's what two cats and a dog have been accused of doing during the First World War.

As part of a series of official British Army documents released by The National Archives last month, the story has emerged of intelligence officers identifying three suspicious characters seen loitering close to British positions on the Western Front, with orders sent out to have them detained immediately and investigated. The report, disclosed in an intelligence briefing from July 1915, stated, "Two cats and a dog are under suspicion, as they have been in the habit of crossing our trenches at night. Steps are being taken to trap them if possible."

The documents do not disclose what happened to the animals, however. David Langrish, records specialist for The National Archives, commented, "The case of the dog and two cats shows the level of suspicion amongst military units at this time... and the extreme experiences of periods on the frontline."

The documents are among 3,987 unit war diaries published last month by The National Archives as part of a programme of events to mark this year's centenary of the outbreak of the First World War.

Germany plays down First World War centenary celebrations

In this the centenary year of the outbreak of the First World War, nations across the globe will be holding a wide range of special events to commemorate the occasion.

But not, it seems, Germany. The country has set aside just €4million (£3.3million) to mark the anniversary, while its programme of events pales in comparison to the UK and France, who have set aside €60million (£50million) each. Even New Zealand has promised to devote €10million (£8.2million) to mark the event. Critics are arguing that Germany owes it to the rest of the continent to take a more prominent role in the commemoration of the war.

It's also been revealed that German Chancellor Angela Merkel (pictured) has no plans to attend any of the events. Sevim Dagdelen, representing the country's Die Linke political party, says there's a need to teach a new generation about the horrors of war, arguing, "This is not about glorifying the war – on the contrary. A hundred years after the First World War, Die Linke's motto is still the same: 'No More War'."

Events

▶ 4 MAY

Abingdon Air & Country Show
Family event with ground attractions, air displays and much more.
Abingdon Airfield, Oxfordshire.
www.abingdonairandcountry.co.uk

▶ 9-11 MAY

Battlegroup North
Three-day event for military vehicles and re-enactor groups. Includes aircraft displays and trade stalls.
Yorkshire Air Museum, York.
www.battlegroupnorth.co.uk

▶ 24 MAY

Llandudno Air Show
Aircraft display including flights from the Hawker Hunter, the Mustang P51D and the Supermarine Spitfire. There will also be a Falcons parachute drop.
Llandudno, Wales.
www.llandudno-air-show.org.uk

▶ 24-26 MAY

Overlord 2014
Huge military show with around 350 vehicles, 500 re-enactors and 100 trade stalls.
www.solentoverlord.co.uk/blog

AND DON'T FORGET THESE EVENTS LATER IN THE YEAR...

▶ 16-20 JULY

The War And Peace Revival
RAF Westenhanger, Folkestone Racecourse, Kent. ***01304 813337;***
www.thewarandpeacerevival.co.uk

▶ 1-3 AUGUST

Military & Flying Machines Show
Damyns Hall Aerodrome, Upminster, Essex.
www.militaryandflyingmachines.org.uk

▶ 23-25 AUGUST

Military Odyssey
The Kent Show Ground, Detling, Kent.
www.military-odyssey.com

▶ 20-21 SEPTEMBER

Euro Militaire
Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone, Kent.
0844 848 8822;
www.euromilitaire.co.uk

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LETTERS

Make your thoughts and opinions known by writing to *History Of War*. Email historyofwar@anthem-publishing.com or send letters to the address below

BRAVE HERTS

Dear Sir,
I would like to make your readers aware of a project that we run, and in particular some detail regarding a database we are compiling of Hertfordshire personnel in the Great War.

I am a founder and the Project Officer for Herts At War (www.hertsatwar.co.uk), a Lottery-funded Great War centenary initiative aimed at re-telling the story of Hertfordshire's role during the war, both at home and abroad.

Over the next four years, we will be running a whole range of activities and events, including designing and organising a museum exhibition that will tour the county throughout that time; co-ordinating an educational programme of contemporary newspaper reproduction; and compiling a Roll of Honour, which will, we hope, eventually tell the stories of every single one of more than 20,000 war casualties from the Hertfordshire area. With a team of 100 or so volunteer researchers working on uncovering these forgotten stories (over a thousand have been researched so far), we often come across incredibly moving and interesting tales that offer a different perspective or have a particular human interest for our followers.

Dan Hill *www.hertsatwar.co.uk*

Dan has offered History Of War access to a selection of the stories his society has uncovered. We plan to print some of them in future issues of the magazine

TALES FROM THE TRENCHES

Dear Sir,
I have just finished reading your feature on the start of the First World War (issue one), which I found to be both well written and fascinating. I was fortunate enough to have known my great grandfather, who fought on the Western Front (though I'm ashamed to say that I can't remember which battle specifically). While he ended up living to a ripe old age (he died, aged 96, in 1984) – this despite being gassed during the war – his memories of life in the trenches haunted him throughout his adult life. Indeed, it was pretty well all he would talk about – the trenchfoot, the shellings and the terror of fighting on the front. Every night, he would have nightmares about the horrors he'd witnessed – a testament to the fact that wars are never over for those who fought in them.

Paul Brewer *Via email*

A STUDENT FAN

Dear Sir,
I have been studying history at Sheffield University, specialising in world conflicts (the university has several modules geared around the history of war in places like America, Vietnam and the Middle East). It's an excellent department and I would recommend it to any A-level student considering continuing their studies, if they have a keen interest in the subjects covered in your excellent new publication. Though that cuts both ways: I think all students of history should pick up a copy of *History Of War*. I've certainly been recommending it to the students on my course! Though I wondered: would you consider offering students a cut price subscription rate?

Duncan Hillory *Via email*

It's great to hear that you're enjoying your studies, Duncan. If you're interested in subscribing to the magazine, our current offer of three issues for £3 as a "starter sub" is hard to beat (see page 40 for details). Though, in direct answer to your question, yes, we will offer students a subscription at 50 per cent of the usual rate. Check out our website for details. www.historyofwar.co.uk

For soldiers fighting on the frontline, war is an experience that they will remember for the rest of their lives

NEW
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WOMEN OF WWI
Vietnam War
TET OFFENSIVE!
HOW HO CHI MINH'S TROOPS CHANGED THE BALANCE OF POWER WITH AN URBAN ASSAULT

Cover illustration Rob Hefferan

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR Paul Pettengale
paul.pettengale@anthem-publishing.com

ART EDITOR Kai Wood
kai.wood@anthem-publishing.com

PRODUCTION EDITOR Paul Dimery
paul.dimery@anthem-publishing.com

SOCIAL-MEDIA EDITOR Chris Short
chris.short@anthem-publishing.com

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR Simon Lewis
simon.lewis@anthem-publishing.com

ART DIRECTOR Jenny Cook
jenny.cook@anthem-publishing.com

MARKETING MANAGER Alex Godfrey
alex.godfrey@anthem-publishing.com

MARKETING EXECUTIVE Kate Doyle
kate.doyle@anthem-publishing.com

MANAGING DIRECTOR Jon Bickley
jon.bickley@anthem-publishing.co.uk

PRINT **Polestar UK Print Ltd**
1 Apex Business Park, Boscombe Road, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, LU5 4SB
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The Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU Tel +44 (0)1582 678900

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ANTHEM PUBLISHING Ltd *Suite 6, Piccadilly House, London Road, Bath BA1 6PL*
Tel +44 (0)1225 489985 Fax +44 (0)1225 489980 www.anthem-publishing.com

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The Tet Offensive

Vietnam War: The Tet public holiday is supposed to be a time of celebration for the people of Vietnam. But in 1968, an unexpected assault by the northern communists turned it into an orgy of death and destruction...

By 1968, the communists had accrued such losses in the Vietnam War that they were willing to gamble everything on a massive assault designed to end the conflict. The goal of the Tet Offensive was to launch a surprise attack on the urban areas of South Vietnam, hopefully sparking an uprising that would force the Americans to exit the war. Although the series of attacks met with some initial success, the Viet Cong actually suffered a debilitating countrywide defeat at the hands of superior US firepower. Their defeat, though, eventually turned into victory, for this most important event of the war caused American resolve to crumble

By late 1967, the Vietnam War had reached a turning point. For over two years, US troops had been involved in battles designed to "find, fix and finish" Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces. These engagements had achieved a high body count, and both President Lyndon B Johnson and General William Westmoreland truly believed that they were winning the conflict. However, cracks were appearing in the American body politic. On campuses from California to Washington DC, anti-war protests were becoming more frequent and more violent, and the public watched the growing spectacle of divisiveness on their television newscasts nightly.

The protests and their attendant media coverage were of great concern to Johnson, and he decided to retaliate by launching a publicity campaign to allay American fears about the war. Towards this end, Johnson called upon several trusted officials – including ex-Presidents Harry S Truman and Dwight Eisenhower – to endorse his actions in Vietnam. Johnson even enlisted Westmoreland himself to assure the nation that the US was indeed winning the war. Westmoreland played his role with alacrity, assuring his fellow citizens ▶

The communists had accrued such losses that they were willing to gamble everything on a massive assault to end the conflict

BACKSTORY

1968 With the Vietnam War into its 12th year, the communist regime of North Vietnam, fronted by Ho Chi Minh, decided to launch a surprise attack on the country's southern cities that would inspire a people's uprising and persuade the US to disengage its troops.

While the Tet Offensive took the US command by surprise, the Americans were quick to deploy their superior firepower and snuff out the assault. However, the consequences of the campaign were damaging for Lyndon Johnson

A Viet Cong suspect is questioned by US infantry during a sweep operation

US troops warily approach a gap in the wall

that the end was in sight. Indeed, he claimed that the battles of attrition had so weakened the enemy that North Vietnam would be unable to launch any significant military operations in the coming year. However, like so many promises made during the crisis, this vow of victory turned out to be a hollow one. The truth of the matter would nearly rend the divided nation asunder.

Grand assault

While the US dealt with issues of internal unity, the North Vietnamese had reached their own turning point of sorts. It was true that the battles of attrition had cost the Viet Cong and the North as a whole a heavy price. Indeed, the losses had been so devastating that President Ho Chi Minh and his Minister of Defence, Vo Nguyen Giap, despaired at the inability of their nation to see the conflict through to ultimate victory.

As a result, Giap and the North Vietnamese leadership decided to eschew the ideal of protracted war and gamble on a single, great military victory in 1968. Giap realised that the US retained the edge in firepower, though, and still hoped to avoid a pitched battle. In the finest revolutionary tradition, he believed that a grand military assault against the imperialist oppressor would spur a popular uprising against which US firepower could not compete. Even if the uprising failed to materialise, it was hoped that South Vietnamese morale would crumble and that the US would rethink its involvement in a war of rising cost. The detailed planning for the offensive was left to General Pham Hung.

Logistical miracle

The preparatory phase began in 1967. During that year, North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and Viet Cong attacks lured US forces deep into the countryside, leaving the defence of the cities in the hands of the less-capable Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN). Operations around Dak To and Khe Sanh formed part of this vast diversion. With the Americans gone, General Hung hoped to launch a rapid attack against light ARVN resistance and seize control of cities all across South Vietnam. A general, people's uprising would then occur before US forces could react.

The second phase of the operation was fraught with danger. Nearly 84,000 NVA and Viet Cong forces had to make their way to staging areas near the South's major cities, the heart of American control. The soldiers utilised tunnel networks, jungle trails and winding rivers to inch towards their objectives. If the movement of such forces was discovered, superior US firepower could destroy the offensive before it began. Although the US command noticed increased activity along the Ho Chi Minh Trail and were wary of a coming battle, they remained ignorant of the overall plan. The result was a logistical and intelligence miracle. Using only their

Key figures

HO CHI MINH
Despite suffering from ill health, the President of North Vietnam showed that he'd lost none of his passion for a fight when he gave his blessing to the Tet Offensive. Up until his death in September 1969, he was demanding that US troops withdraw from the country.

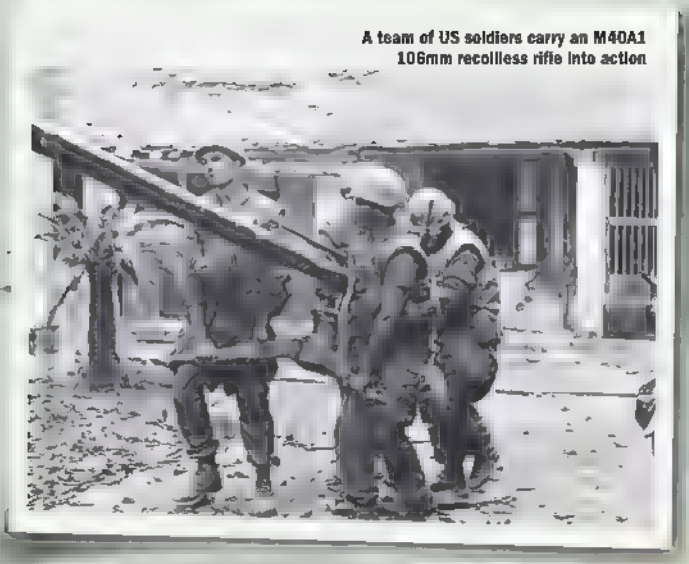
VO NGUYEN GIAP
Giap was Ho Chi Minh's Minister of Defence throughout the war. He later argued that the Tet Offensive was not purely a military strategy, but rather part of "a general strategy, an integrated one; at once military, political and diplomatic".

LYNDON B JOHNSON
Sworn in as US President following John F Kennedy's death in 1963, Johnson reversed his predecessor's policy of withdrawing military personnel from Vietnam. The number of men stationed there increased from 16,000 in 1963 to 550,000 by 1968.

WILLIAM WESTMORELAND
Westmoreland commanded US operations in Vietnam from 1964-1968. He felt the communists could be destroyed by fighting a war of attrition, but struggled to convince Johnson to widen the conflict into Laos and Cambodia to intercept the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

PHAM HUNG
Hung directed the Viet Cong's guerrilla warfare during the Vietnam conflict and was responsible for co-ordinating the Tet Offensive. He went on to become the Prime Minister of Vietnam between 1987 and 1988, before dying in his second year in office.

CLARK CLIFFORD
Clifford became Lyndon Johnson's Secretary of Defence on 19 January 1968, replacing Robert McNamara. Shortly after his appointment, he advised the President to deny William Westmoreland's plea for an additional 206,000 troops in Vietnam.



A team of US soldiers carry an M40A1 106mm recoilless rifle into action

feet and their wits, the Viet Cong and NVA had gathered their forces and stood ready to launch a surprise assault on every major city in South Vietnam

Psychological victory

The attack itself was to take place when the South Vietnamese and US forces least expected it – the Tet Lunar New Year. This important Vietnamese holiday was an occasion for a celebratory ceasefire. The ARVN had sent many of its soldiers home to enjoy it. US commanders, though they expected something, believed that any major enemy assault would take place at the US Marine base at Khe Sanh. The NVA had been massing forces around that isolated base for some time, and both Westmoreland and Johnson feared that Giap would try to achieve a great victory there just as he had at Dien Bien Phu against the French in 1954. No one in the US command expected urban assaults of the magnitude of the Tet Offensive. The world's great superpower had been tricked.

Early on the morning of 30 January 1968, the NVA and Viet Cong launched their offensive against the South's urban centres. One of the main, if rather symbolic, objectives was the US Embassy compound in Saigon. Viet Cong sappers blew a hole into the wall that surrounded the Embassy. Once inside the courtyard, they opened fire with automatic weapons and rockets. They never managed to gain entry to the building proper, though, as US Military Police battled with the commandos for six hours and eventually killed them all.

The Viet Cong had penetrated to the centre of the most secure place in the country and attacked the very symbol of American power. General Westmore and rushed to the scene and held a press conference amid the rubble of the battle Standing near the bodies of dead Viet Cong, he again assured the American people that the situation was in hand and that the enemy had suffered a major defeat. To many American television viewers, though, the surroundings belied Westmoreland's optimism. The assault on the Embassy had been a military defeat for the Viet Cong, yet they had achieved a major psychological victory

In the wake of the Embassy assault, communist forces attacked targets all over Saigon. A total of 35 battalions were dedicated to the operation, with 11 designated for attacks in the city centre The city itself was the bustling heart of South Vietnamese life and more than three million lived in the conurbation. Although many of the inhabitants were desperately poor, Saigon remained the centre of control by, and support for, the South Vietnamese government.

The communists decided not to combine their forces in a traditional attempt to conquer the city; the attacks were designed to cause terror and provoke a revolution. To that end, small units struck separately at sensitive targets citywide. These were chosen for maximum symbolic meaning. A small suicide squad attacked the heavily defended Presidential Palace. Similar units struck the headquarters of both Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) and the ARVN, as well as the government radio station. Some of the most ferocious fighting took place at the huge Tan Son Nhut airbase, where surprised US troops found themselves

GUEST OF THE WEST
LONG BEFORE BECOMING A COMMUNIST REVOLUTIONARY LEADER, HO CHI MINH HAD SPELLS LIVING IN BOTH THE UK AND THE US HE WAS EVEN A PASTRY BOY ON THE NEWHAVEN-DIEPPE FERRY!

No one in the US command expected urban assaults of this magnitude. The world's great superpower had been tricked

Tunnel war

During the conflict, the Viet Cong constructed tunnel systems both to avoid contact with US forces and to launch surprise assaults against them. Vast underground complexes covering hundreds of miles reached from Saigon to the border with Cambodia.

The Cu Chi district, some 25 miles (40km) from Saigon, contained the most extensive systems in South Vietnam – over 100 miles (160km) of tunnels connecting most villages and containing storage areas, training sites and even hospitals. The tiny, dark tunnels themselves were too small to allow entry for most Americans. Thus emerged the "tunnel rat" – elite soldiers armed only with a pistol and a flashlight, whose job it was to confront the Viet Cong in their subterranean hideaways.

The Viet Cong defended their territory well with booby traps, including poisonous snakes and spiders. A favourite defensive tactic was to wait in an alcove and, while the American lowered himself into the tunnel, fire one shot into his groin. It would take the remaining Americans several minutes to extricate the wounded soldier, allowing the defender to flee and exit the system using camouflaged, secret tunnel openings/exits.

In the tunnels of Cu Chi, the communists planned for the Tet Offensive and gathered troops for the assault on Saigon. Without their hidden mazes below ground, it's doubtful that the Viet Cong would have been able to attack the city in any meaningful way in 1968.

For their part, the Americans did all they could to destroy the networks. The use of "tunnel rats", though important until the end of the war, only helped to destroy the occupants and not the tunnels themselves. Several Boeing B-52 raids struck the Cu Chi area, but the tunnels and their inhabitants proved resilient and the Viet Cong threat remained. Finally, the US resorted to a wholesale destruction of the district. Massive Rome Plows were used to destroy the forests in the area, and to bulldoze over the numerous tunnel entrances and exits, entombing any defenders inside them.

At the Tan Son Nhut airbase, every US soldier who was able to grabbed a weapon and defended himself in the vicious fighting

attacked from three directions at once. In the dark, confusion reigned as the Viet Cong fanned out into the facility. Every US soldier who was able to grabbed a weapon and defended himself in the vicious fighting. When morning arrived, helicopters, bombers and tanks came to rescue the beleaguered defenders and destroy the attacking forces.

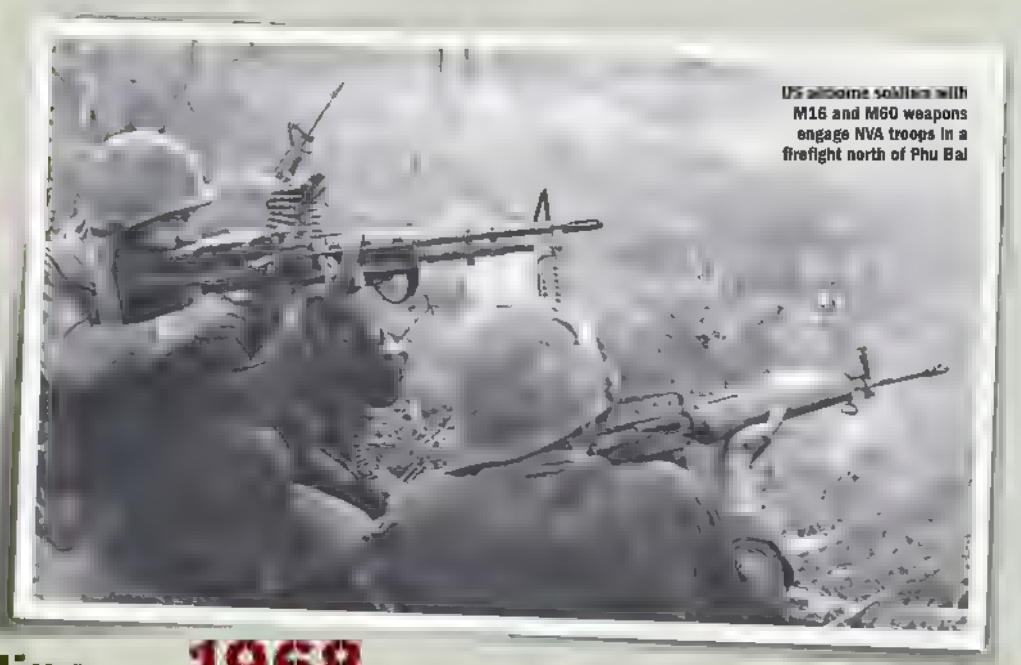
Throughout Saigon, the Viet Cong had achieved initial surprise. However, the ARVN troops, leavened with US support, fought doggedly and drove the attackers off with heavy losses. The attacks in and around the capital, then, were all military failures. The Viet Cong had achieved none of their tactical goals and had suffered prohibitive losses. In addition, the hoped-for general uprising did not take place. There would be no revolutionary wrath displayed on the part of the people, and the "imperialist oppressors" would not be driven out.

The assault, though, did cause considerable damage. In their efforts to drive the attackers away, US and ARVN forces had been somewhat indiscriminate in their use of firepower. As a result, there were civilian casualties and many thousands were left homeless. The mood in Saigon darkened as well. Inhabitants of the city had always felt somewhat removed from the fighting and believed that their government, with the considerable aid of the Americans, could protect them. That illusion had been shattered. The public confidence in a regime already maligned for graft and impropriety now plummeted.

Massive revolution

The Viet Cong dedicated much effort during the Tet Offensive to the decisive Mekong Delta region, a traditional Viet Cong heartland. The vast, marshy area was the scene of a true insurgency, with the group operating from within the population, and it was felt that the ideal of causing a massive revolution stood its best chance of success there. The Viet Cong attacked 13 of 16 provincial capitals in the Mekong Delta during Tet. The ARVN forces in the region initially performed poorly and some of their commanders even refused to answer their telephones during the struggle, so that they wouldn't be asked to make decisions. To save the situation, US forces rushed in and drove off the Viet

W FEAST OF FIRSTS
THE WORD TET IS A SHORTENED VERSION OF TET NGUYEN DAN, WHICH IS SINO-VIETNAMESE FOR "FEAST OF THE FIRST MORNING OF THE FIRST DAY"



US airborne soldiers with M16 and M60 weapons engage NVA troops in a firefight north of Phu Bai

1967 Tet Timeline 1968

APRIL
The communists' plan for a massive offensive in South Vietnam to inspire a people's uprising and force US troops out of the country is conceived.

OCTOBER
The North Vietnamese Politburo decides on the Tet Lunar New Year holiday as the launch day for the offensive.

20 DECEMBER
After observations of increased activity on the Ho Chi Minh Trail, William Westmoreland says that he expects the communists to undertake an "intensified countryside effort over a relatively short period of time".

JANUARY 1968
By the start of January, some 81,000 tons of supplies and 200,000 troops, including seven infantry regiments and 20 independent battalions, have made the trip south on the Ho Chi Minh Trail, ready for the offensive.

21 JANUARY
North Vietnamese troops launch a preliminary attack at Khe Sanh, as between 20,000 and 40,000 troops besiege the US Marine garrison.

30 JANUARY
The Tet Offensive is launched just after midnight, with around 84,000 troops hitting more than 100 targets, including Saigon.

30 JANUARY
Today sees the start of the Battle of Hué, one of the bloodiest engagements of the Vietnam War. The city is virtually destroyed, while some 5,000 Vietnamese civilians are killed.

Cong. With the full weight of US firepower deployed, civilian losses were quite high, with conservative estimates put at over 8,000 casualties and 200,000 made homeless. The Viet Cong suffered heavily as well, losing nearly 6,000.

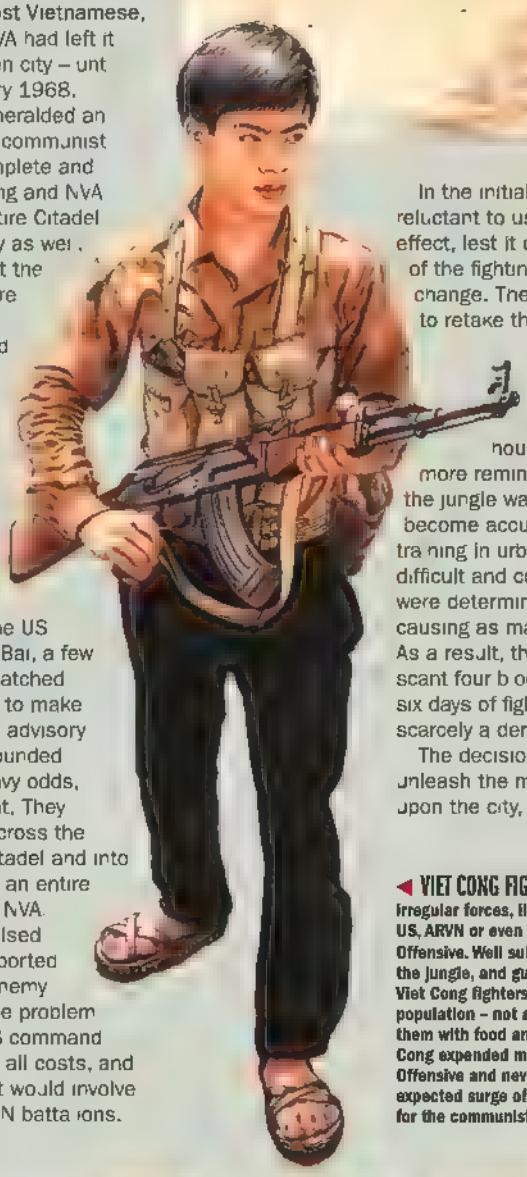
Titanic struggle

The Tet Offensive reached its ferocious climax in Hué. Situated on the coast north of Danang, this historic and beautiful city had once served as the imperial capital of Vietnam. The Perfume River divides the city into two halves North of the river lies the walled Citadel, the older and more populous part of Hue. The modern New City occupies the land south of the river. As the respected imperial capital, Hué enjoyed a special place in the hearts of most Vietnamese, and the Viet Cong and NVA had left it untouched. It was an open city – until the morning of 31 January 1968.

At 3.30am, a barrage heralded an invasion by nearly 8,000 communist troops. Surprise was complete and within hours, the Viet Cong and NVA forces had seized the entire Citadel and much of the New City as well. Hué was the only city that the communists would capture and hold during Tet. The struggle to retake it would last over a month and stands as the bloodiest single battle of the Vietnam War. During it, Hué would be destroyed and the conflict would change irrevocably.

The American reaction to the attack reflected their inability to grasp the reality of Tet. The US Marine command at Phu Bai, a few miles south of Hué, despatched a single company of men to make contact with an American advisory force that had been surrounded. The Marines, against heavy odds, actually achieved this feat. They next sent two platoons across the Perfume River into the Citadel and into direct contact with nearly an entire division of Viet Cong and NVA. The Americans were repulsed with heavy losses and reported contact with a sizeable enemy unit. The magnitude of the problem now dawned upon the US command. Hué had to be retaken at all costs, and before the battle ended it would involve three Marine and 11 ARVN battalions.

US soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division conduct an armour-supported search for Viet Cong snipers holed up in the city of Hue



In the initial fighting, the US was reluctant to use its firepower to full effect, lest it destroy Hué. The ferocity of the fighting, though, forced a change. The plan was for the Marines to retake the New City while the ARVN recaptured the Citadel. ARVN and Marine forces found themselves locked in a house-to-house, room-to-room battle more reminiscent of Stalingrad than the jungle warfare to which they had become accustomed. The on-the-job training in urban warfare was very difficult and costly, for the communists were determined to stand and fight, causing as many casualties as possible. As a result, the Marines advanced a scant four blocks on a narrow front in six days of fighting, and the ARVN made scarcely a dent in the Citadel's defences.

The decision was then made to unleash the might of US firepower upon the city, reducing much of it to rubble as a result. There had been no time to evacuate civilians, so many became innocent victims of the titanic struggle. Still the communists held firm, determined to defend the shattered buildings to the end. The fighting was savage and often hand-to-hand.

◀ VIET CONG FIGHTER The Viet Cong were irregular forces, lightly equipped compared to the US, ARVN or even NVA troops involved in the Tet Offensive. Well suited to rapid movement through the jungle, and guerrilla warfare in dense terrain, Viet Cong fighters received support from the local population – not always voluntarily – who supplied them with food and other necessities. The Viet Cong expended most of their strength in the Tet Offensive and never really recovered, while the expected surge of popular support in South Vietnam for the communist cause never materialised

House of corpses

By 9 February, the Marines had cleared the New City of all but a few isolated snipers, leaving behind a charnel house of corpses and shattered buildings. In the Citadel, though, the battle raged on. It had become apparent that the ARVN would need aid to recapture the hereditary capital. As a result, the First Battalion, Fifth Regiment of the Marines crossed the Perfume River to join the fray. All the while, the enemy fought on with a bitter resolve. The battle continued until the ARVN forces finally raised their flag over the Imperial Palace on 24 February. Even then, pockets of NVA continued to resist, mainly in the Gia Hoi area of the city.

Once the Citadel had fallen, the NVA did not attempt to hold the vulnerable Gia Hoi area. Again, the military decision was sound but, in the meantime, the NVA had converted much of the district into a hellish collection of mass graves. Some communist forces, however, fought on, and it was 2 March before Hué was entirely liberated. During the month of fighting, in addition to the thousands of civilian deaths, over 8,000 soldiers ▶

31 JANUARY

Following the first two days of the offensive, the US command announces that nearly 5,000 Viet Cong troops have been killed, compared with around 500 American/South Vietnamese soldiers.

FEBRUARY-MAY

Approximately 50,000 North Vietnamese troops are despatched down the Ho Chi Minh Trail to replace losses incurred during the earlier fighting.

29 APRIL-30 MAY

The Battle of Dai Do sees North Vietnamese soldiers engage in savage battles with US forces before withdrawing, losing 2,100 men compared to America's 290.

4 MAY

During the early hours, communist units initiate the second phase of the offensive, known as Mini-Tet, by striking 119 targets throughout South Vietnam, including Saigon again.

12 MAY

Mini-Tet concludes as Viet Cong forces withdraw from the area, leaving behind more than 3,000 fallen troops.

25 MAY

Communists return to Saigon and launch another wave of attacks, resulting in more than 87,000 civilians being made homeless and another 500 being killed.

17 AUGUST

Phase III of the offensive begins as North Vietnamese troops assert pressure on US Special Forces camps. Within five weeks, some 20,000 NVA men have been killed and the attack is deemed a failure. ▶

1 Initial communist assaults at Hué are successful, though the Citadel and airfield hold out under heavy attack. The airfield is abandoned and ARVN forces concentrate on holding the Citadel
AIRFIELD
OLD CITY
IMPERIAL PALACE
PERFUME RIVER

Battle of Hué

30 January – 2 March 1968

One of the longest engagements of the Vietnam War, the Battle of Hué saw fierce fighting between US/ARVN forces and northern communists. By the end of the skirmish, 80 per cent of the city had been destroyed

5 The last communist forces are driven from the Citadel and the west of the city by US and ARVN soldiers, securing Hué by 2 March
4 US Marines reach the Old City by helicopter and boat, and begin fighting their way through the city. Resistance is heavy but the communists are gradually pushed westwards
2 ARVN reinforcements attempt to reach the Citadel but are initially halted. A second attempt finally breaks through communist lines at a cost of several vehicles lost
NEW CITY
3 US Marines attempt to cross the Perfume River but are forced back by heavy resistance. Clearance of the New City starts

The bodies of dead Viet Cong litter the Saigon streets while shocked ARVN soldiers take a brief rest from the fighting

American nurses in Vietnam

The Veterans' Administration counts 11,000 women as having served in Vietnam, and around 80 per cent of these served as nurses. Although, technically, women never saw combat during the war, the hospitals in which they worked often came under fire; indeed, this resulted in the deaths of eight American women and the wounding of dozens more.

All the nurses were officers and served a one-year tour of duty in an unforgiving "men's only" environment. They undertook their mission of mercy with great care and unfailing strength, and the combat soldiers looked upon them as admirable and tough. US troops were only exposed to killing for short periods, but nurses faced death and mutilation every day as new batches of wounded boys – many of them teenagers – came under their care. They had to aid doctors in surgery, comfort patients who had learned they would never walk again, and hold the hands of the dying. Stress levels were high, and often resulted in burn-out and lingering trauma for the women.

Upon returning home, nurses faced the same adjustment problems that most veterans did. They were lost and alone in a society that had come to dislike them and their war. The problems for nurses, though, were often even greater than those faced by men. In one case, a nurse veteran named Lynda van Devanter attempted to join a veterans' march after the war. However, the organiser would not allow her to participate, saying she was not a true veteran, no matter where she had served. It was 1982 before the Veterans' Administration even acknowledged that women were Vietnam veterans.

DEATH OF A PRESIDENT

LYNDON JOHNSON DIED OF A HEART ATTACK ON 22 JANUARY 1973 – THE DAY BEFORE A CEASEFIRE WAS SIGNED IN VIETNAM. IT WAS ALSO JUST A MONTH AFTER HARRY S TRUMAN'S DEATH

had perished and 75 per cent of the population had been left homeless. Many of the once-proud citizens of Hué simply wandered among the rubble and the corpses, unable to comprehend what had happened. The city had been destroyed, but it was "free".

The final act of the great Tet Offensive took place at the remote US Marine base of Khe Sanh. Communist forces had been encroaching on the isolated site for months. Giap hoped that the impending threat to it would help lure American troops away from the cities, and he was correct. Some 40,000 NVA and Viet Cong surrounded barely 6,000 Marines, and the coming battle there was supposed to form the final stage of Tet. After the popular uprising, Giap reasoned that such a Dien Bien Phu-style victory would force the US out of the conflict.

Once the Tet Offensive, and the attendant fighting at Khe Sanh, had drawn to a close, it was apparent that the communists had suffered a crushing defeat. There had been no uprising. The people of South Vietnam were, as a whole, unwilling to come to the aid of their brothers from the North. This realisation was sobering for the northern leadership. It meant that the people of the South were not disillusioned with their regime to the point of wanting to wage armed struggle. Also, few members of the ARVN had defected and their units fought more doggedly than the communists had expected.

In the end, then, it appeared that the South Vietnamese government would never topple as long as it retained US support. Ho and Giap had to rely on a military defeat of US forces in the field to achieve victory. It was a stunning revelation for the communists. From the beginning, they'd believed that they struggled for and alongside the oppressed people of the South. Tet indicated that that was not the case

A nurse treats an injured US serviceman in a field hospital

Communist disaster

In starker military terms, Tet had been an unmitigated disaster for the communists and the greatest single victory of the war for the US. The American strategy had been one of attrition, however Viet Cong and NVA forces had always refused to be fixed into battle. When losses became prohibitive, they broke off contact, relying on a protracted war strategy to wear down US resolve. Tet changed that. The northern forces had offered battle and fixed themselves into place, then found themselves at the mercy of US firepower.

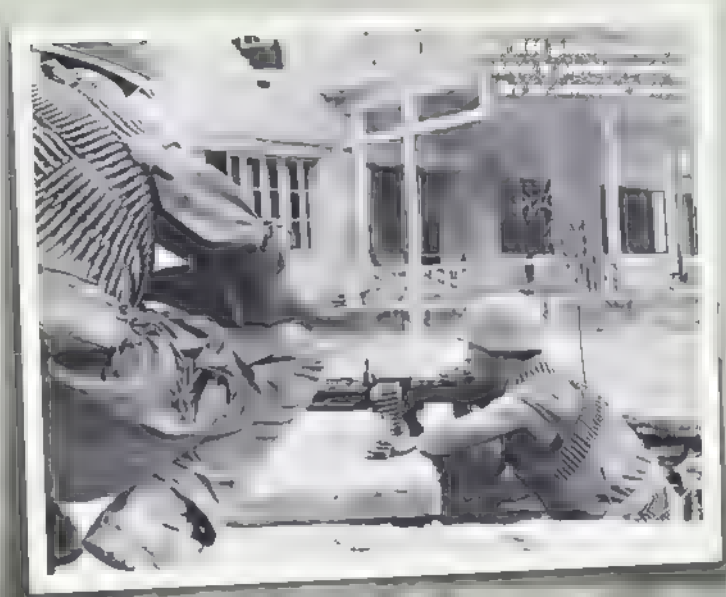
Of the 84,000 Viet Cong and NVA committed to the Tet Offensive, some 58,000 were killed. This represents a fatal-casualty rate of 70 per cent. The slaughter virtually wiped out the Viet Cong as an effective fighting force. The remaining cadres had to retreat far into the countryside in an effort to recruit new soldiers. As a result, the amount of rural Vietnam controlled by the Viet Cong fell dramatically. In an effort to stabilise the situation, more NVA regulars poured down the Ho Chi Minh Trail to reinforce units that had been destroyed. The process of rebuilding was slow and allowed the South Vietnamese time to rebuild and resupply. The communists would fight on, of course, but their defeat in Tet seemed to be comprehensive. Little did they know that it would transform into a psychological victory over the strongest nation in the world.

General Westmoreland was quite pleased with the American victory in the Tet Offensive, and longed to chase the embattled foe into its hiding places and destroy it. Both he and Johnson trumpeted the news of the victory to the nation. Tet was indeed a great triumph for the US armed forces. Ironically, though, the American public would not interpret the event in the same way, seeing it as a defeat. Scant months before, public figures had assured them that victory was at hand. The mass vc-scale surprise attacks of Tet shocked an American public that had been lulled into complacency. The fact that they had

taken place at all, and assaulted the very symbols of American authority in the process, was a blow to the national psyche. To be sure, the Viet Cong and NVA had to give up all of their gains, and suffered heavy losses. However, the attritional nature of the victory was hard for most Americans to understand; their forces had captured no city and had not seized enemy territory. The only signs of victory were masses of enemy dead. It seemed that the North had limitless numbers of men to call upon, and that the war would get ever more serious and costly, and possibly last forever.

In the wake of Tet, Westmoreland was anxious to press home his advantage and hoped to win Johnson's support for widening the war in South East Asia. General Earle Wheeler, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had other plans. He saw Tet as an opportunity to set right several military wrongs. The US had seriously weakened its forces in Europe and South Korea in an effort to supply troops for Vietnam. This cannibalising of existing forces was due to Johnson's reluctance to call up the National Guard and Reserves, and place the US on a full wartime footing.

Few members of the ARVN had defected and their units fought more doggedly than the communists had expected



Wheeler flew to Vietnam in late February on a fact-finding mission. On the way, he spoke with Westmoreland and the two agreed that to achieve the goals of victory in Vietnam and stability in the rest of the world, Westmoreland required 206,000 more men. Wheeler then returned to Washington and placed the troop request before Johnson.

The massive troop request shocked members of the administration. Even Robert McNamara, in some ways the architect of the war, was taken aback. How could it be that communist forces had just suffered a crippling defeat, yet Westmoreland needed 206,000 more men? McNamara, who was about to resign for personal reasons, undertook his last act as Secretary of State and advised Johnson against the troop request. Johnson realised the magnitude of Wheeler's call for more soldiers. Approval of the request would require calling up the National Guard and Reserve, and would dislocate the economy. Vietnam would truly become a war; it was time to get "into" the war or get out. Johnson's decision would be the most important single act during the American involvement in Vietnam

Firestorm of protest

For advice, Johnson turned to the new Secretary of State, Clark Clifford, a relative newcomer to the ongoing governmental debates regarding the war in the region. Clifford knew the gravity of the situation and took his role seriously. He formed a task force that began a study of almost every aspect of US involvement in Vietnam. The results of the investigation were frightening, and Clifford realised that American policy in the country was bankrupt.

"I could not find out when the war was going to end; I could not find out the manner in which it was going to end," he later said. "I could not find out whether the new requests for men and equipment were going to be enough, or whether it would take more. All I had was the statement, given with too little

Slaughter at Gia Hoi

During the Tet Offensive, the NVA ruled over the Gia Hoi district of Hué for over three weeks. Thus, in one tiny part of the city, the communists were able to institute their revolution. In the main, they ruled using terror tactics. They felt it was their time for revenge against those who were deemed to have aided and abetted the "American imperialist aggressor".

They had lists, supplied by communist sympathisers, that contained the names and addresses of persons who were part of, or who supported, the South Vietnamese government. Heavily armed NVA officers strode through the streets and announced the names of the suspects using megaphones, asking that they report to the high school. Here, the revolutionary provisional government would administer "re-education". Some did as they were told and others attempted to hide. Time, however, was on the side of the NVA, allowing them to hunt down "subversive" elements at their leisure.

Once they'd been located, the result was always the same – death. The most common method of execution used by the NVA was to bind the victim's arms at the wrist and then fire one round into the back of their skull. However, when it became clear that Gia Hoi would fall, in an effort to save time, many victims were simply buried alive. A conservative estimate is that the communists executed nearly 3,000 people during the struggle.

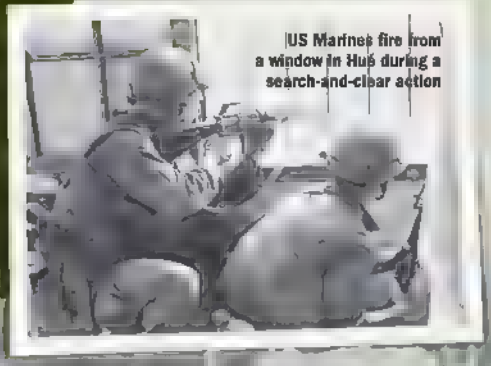
The civilian deaths at the hands of the communists would have an even greater importance. As the war drew to a close, Lyndon Johnson's successor as US President, Richard Nixon, would search for peace with honour. He realised that if US forces left South Vietnam too quickly, the resulting communist victory would cause a humanitarian tragedy. Millions of people had supported US forces or the South Vietnamese government, and the killings in Hué seemed to indicate that these men and women would be slaughtered. Nixon, for good or ill, used this rationale to extend American involvement in the conflict.

self-assurance to be comforting, that if we persisted for an indeterminate length of time, the enemy would choose not to go on. So I asked, 'Does anyone see any diminution in the will of the enemy after four years of our having been there, after enormous casualties, and after massive destruction from our bombing?' The answer was that there appeared to be no diminution in the will of the enemy."

Clifford set out to convince Johnson not only to reject the troop request but also to begin a gradual withdrawal. Matters became worse for Johnson when the story of the troop request appeared in the *New York Times*, provoking a firestorm of public protest. Politics also played a role in Johnson's decision. Eugene McCarthy, running against him in the Democratic primary as a peace candidate, almost won the New Hampshire primary. The near-victory convinced the much more politically formidable Robert Kennedy to enter the fray. Johnson's war – and his presidency – were coming apart.

Crushing news

Clifford applied the final pressure by gathering together the "wise men". This group of advisers, including Dean Acheson and Averell Harriman, informed Johnson that they, too, believed the country should disengage from the war. The news crushed Johnson, who had to come to grips with the idea that he'd presided over the greatest foreign-policy failure in US history.



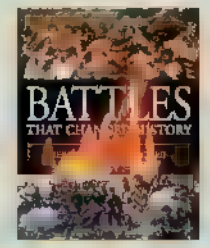
US Marines fire from a window in Hué during a search-and-clear action

The results of the investigation were frightening and Clifford realised that American policy in Vietnam was bankrupt

On 31 March, Johnson spoke to a live television audience. He informed the public that US policy in Vietnam was to change and that a gradual withdrawal would begin. His final statement was a bombshell: "With America's sons in the fields far away, with America's future under challenge right here at home... I do not believe that I should devote an hour or a day of my time to any personal partisan causes. Accordingly, I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as your President."

The Tet Offensive was indeed the most important development of the Vietnam War. NVA and Viet Cong forces had hoped to cause an uprising and win a great victory over the US. Instead, American firepower inflicted grievous losses upon the communists, sending them to inglorious defeat. Ironically, even as despair in Hanoi reached its height, American support for the war unravelled. The US victory was seen as a defeat, and one so devastating that Johnson and his advisers began the tortuously slow process of American withdrawal from South Vietnam. In March, Johnson so much as admitted that the war was lost. He then refused to run for another term as President, and thus became a casualty of his own war.

This feature was edited using material from two books: *Military Classics: The Vietnam War* by Andrew Wiest and Chris McNab, and *Battles That Changed History*. Both are published by Amber Books and are both available from www.amberbooks.co.uk



WILLIAM'S A WINNER

DESPITE THE WIDELY ACCEPTED OPINION THAT THERE WERE NO VICTORS IN THE VIETNAM WAR, WILLIAM WESTMORELAND LATER CLAIMED THAT UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP, US FORCES "WON EVERY BATTLE"

Although the attacks on Saigon achieved little lasting success, they caused significant disruption. Here, fire trucks rush to attend one of the many deliberate fires lit by the attacking communists

INSIDE VIEW

Armoured fortresses

WWII NAZI BUNKERS

When Allied forces advanced through Germany in 1944, they had to overcome the fortifications built in 1937 and 1938 – the dreaded Siegfried Line

There were two significant obstacles facing American troops as they marched through France and over the German border in 1944. One was natural, and had foiled advances into Germany for over a thousand years: the Rhine River had to be crossed, which was no mean feat in itself. But first, the manmade obstacle, which the Germans had largely built during 1937 and 1938. The Siegfried Line comprised a series of solid defences – pill boxes and bunkers, mainly – that would prove extremely hard to crack.

Initially, the US Army was bullish about its attack on the Siegfried Line: the defences had fallen into disrepair during the previous five years. However, whilst the Americans were waiting for supplies and fuel to arrive, the Germans took the chance to rebuild and restock. The Americans' complacency would cost them 6,000 lives in their attack on Germany's so-called West Wall.

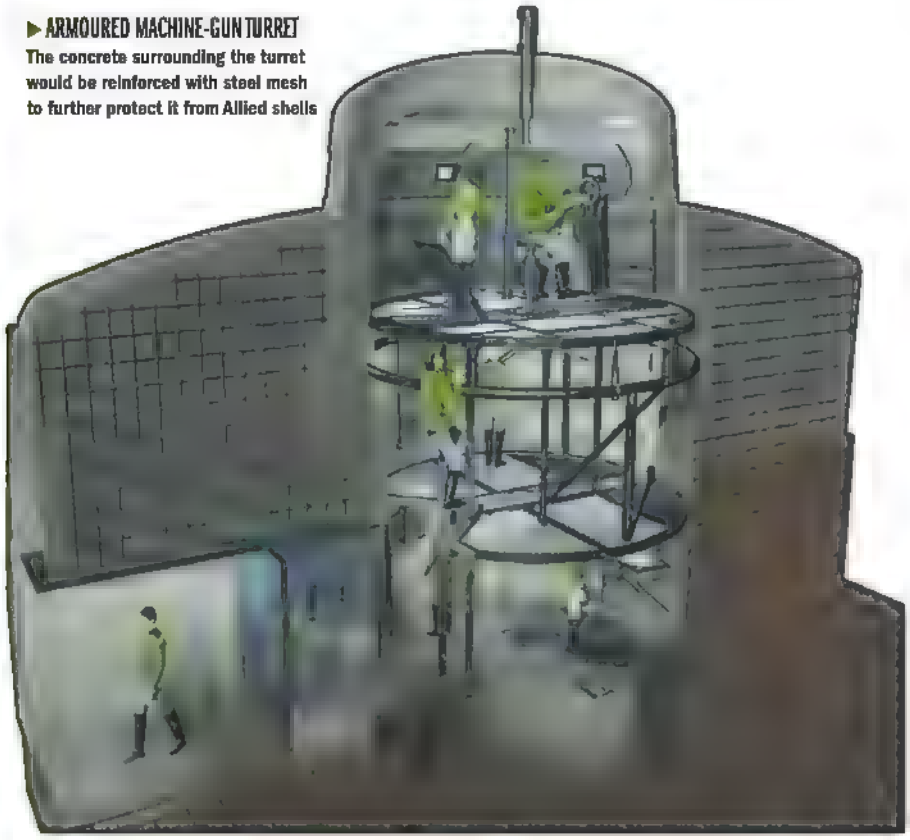
The bunkers were extremely robust. Indeed, when the GIs encountered them, they would often look for ways of avoiding them entirely. But there was worse to come. Before the 76th Infantry Division could get to the Rhine, they would have to overcome the most fearsome of the German defences: the Katzenkopf positions barred their advance and they boasted an array of deadly arms.

Here, we present you with schematics of one of those bunkers – the Katzenkopf B Werk, so named because of the B-grade thickness of its concrete construction. Ninety soldiers would man it for periods of up to three months at a time. Ironically, Hitler criticised it for not being fortified enough.

▼ AUTOMATIC MORTAR The main weapon employed would be a 5cm M19 automatic mortar, capable of firing up to 750 metres. Few were made – estimates put its number at fewer than 100

▲ HIGH FIRE RATE Clips of mortar shells would be prepared by several soldiers, loading up to 120 – though, typically, only 60 of the 0.9kg bombs were fired at a time

▶ ARMOURED MACHINE-GUN TURRET The concrete surrounding the turret would be reinforced with steel mesh to further protect it from Allied shells



▲ FLANKING MACHINE GUN Typically, the machine gun used in the turrets would be the MG34 – the most advanced machine gun in the world when made in 1934. It was capable of firing up to 900 rounds per minute

▼ FLAMETHROWER Capable of operating in a full 360° arc, the flamethrower was one of the most feared of the weapons within the Katzenkopf B Werk

▲ FLAMETHROWER GAS SOURCE The gas canister that powered the flamethrower was housed separately from the 'thrower itself

ABOVE GROUND

ARMOURED TURRETS Two turrets were mounted on the roof, each housing MG34 heavy machine guns

M19 MORTAR Because of its range, the mortar exit was housed towards the rear of the building. This had the advantage of making it difficult for the Allies to target

FLAMETHROWER POSITION
The flamethrower was positioned more or less in the centre of the complex roof

STEEL-DOOR ENTRANCES Positioned at the rear of the Katzenkopf B Werk, these could only be overcome once the complex's defences had been passed

BELOW GROUND

KITCHEN AND SUPPLIES ROOMS
With 90 men to feed for up to three months, as many as 32,400 meals worth of food would have to be stored

SLEEPING QUARTERS There was not enough room for 90 soldiers to sleep at the same time, so the two sleeping quarters would be used in shifts

ARMOURED TUNNEL
There were two tunnels, which led to separate armoured machine-gun turrets

LIQUID-FUEL STORE
Fuel needed to power the bunker would be stored in canisters. Enough fuel for three months would be required

FLAMETHROWER SUPPLY ROOM The fuel used for the fortress' flamethrower was positioned right at the centre of the building, beneath the flamethrower itself

FIRST-AID ROOM Emergency operations and first aid would be conducted in a two-bed room. While that sounds insufficient, in the event of the installation being overrun, the room was more than likely redundant

Illustrations from *Hitler's Fortresses*, © Osprey Books

Women at War

First World War: When conflict came to Europe in 1914, it wasn't just Britain's men who were thrust into the thick of the action – as **Kate Adie** reports, the nation's womenfolk faced an equally difficult challenge...

Back in the days when much of the globe was coloured pink and Victoria was not only a Queen but an Empress, war happened a long way away: the British Empire's battles were distant. Men went off to fight in places with exotic names; news came back fitfully, often long after the last shot had been fired

In 1914, war came to the home front. The conflict dominated every aspect of life, from whole streets of men marching off to be soldiers, to the local pub having its opening hours curtailed. The sound of the artillery in France could be heard from across the Channel in the fields of Kent. The sky over England saw the new flying machines arrive carrying bombs. The country was so tested, so stretched, that for once it needed the abilities of its women – otherwise there would be no victory. They rose to the challenge, proved themselves capable and were partly granted the vote when peace returned. But they were then expected to give up their new jobs, return to their second-class status and forget their achievements. However, they had achieved so much – demonstrating that they could weld, deliver post, saw off a leg, drive a tram, entertain troops to the sound of shellfire, read lessons in church and play decent football in front of 20,000 people (all previously thought utterly beyond a woman) – that they left indelible footprints of a giant stride on the way to fairness and equality for their sex.

"Drunken old crones"

The memory of that war, though hazy for many, still hovers over the nation and over families. Schoolchildren are taken to the Flanders cemeteries to see the unending rows of white headstones No illness in my youth was without the words: "Your grandmother died from that flu in the Great War – now take your medicine." Flying enthusiasts still talk warmly about the Sopwith Camel and "string-bags". *It's A Long Way To Tipperary* can be hummed by millions Family-history searches turn up great grandfathers who died young in some corner of a foreign field that is forever England

I first learned of warfare through the domestic prism of a splintered walnut sideboard embedded with iron fragments, courtesy of Hitler's Luftwaffe in 1943, some years before I was born. In the 1950s, I saw fear cross neighbours' faces when the air-raid siren was occasionally tested, and there were bomb sites full ▶

FLU CRISIS TOWARDS THE END OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR, NURSES ATTENDING TO WOUNDED SOLDIERS ALSO HAD TO CONTEND WITH THE SPREAD OF DEADLY SPANISH FLU, WITH MANY RISKING THEIR OWN LIVES TO HELP OTHERS

The country was so tested, so stretched, that for once it needed the abilities of its women – otherwise there would be no victory

of rubble and buddleia to play in. My childhood was full of the echoes of the Second World War – and my family lived a long way from any battlefield. So I brought to my reporting a sense that war affected everyone, even if they were not in uniform and had never heard a shot fired. Looking at the Great War, I was curious about what happened to all those who were enjoined to "keep the home fires burning". What did the war demand of women – and how did they respond? Maids and Duchesses, housewives and young girls. The nurse, the student, the factory worker, the Suffragette. If we remember the millions of men who sacrificed their lives, what should we remember about those who fought on the home front?

The one job that all agreed a woman should do, never mind could, was nurse. Tradition, convention, popular sentiment and necessity all combined to approve the work. But underneath lurked the worm of ambivalence. Angel or floor scrubber? Cool fingers soothing the brow or hand on the bed pan?

MISTER LAWRENCE
FOR DOROTHY LAWRENCE, SERVING AS A NURSE IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR DIDN'T FULFIL HER ADVENTUROUS AMBITIONS – SHE DISGUISED HERSELF AS A MAN AND BECAME A SOLDIER

Half a century previously, Florence Nightingale had dragged nursing into relative respectability. She herself had initially despaired of the "drunken old crones" who turned up at the Crimean War. The word "nurse" then had implications well beyond the bedside manner, and after decades of effort there was still a view that "nice" young women should really not be involved in tending men's bodies. The idea is not yet dead: it was voiced to me several times in Libya, southern Iraq and the Gulf states by indignant hospital doctors who said that only "immoral Europeans" were suited to this kind of work.

At the start of the 20th Century, professional training was available in Britain and there was an understanding that nurses were an essential part of efficient treatment. Even so, it was still very much a working-class job, in part due to the thought that paying someone to be caring diluted the nurse's dedication. Nuns and charitable organisations did such work for free – it was a vocation, surely, a word that contained so much more virtue than "job". Caring was perceived as the core characteristic of being a woman. Why should you pay them to do what came naturally? So, not surprisingly, the professional and the volunteer occupied very different spheres in the public mind when the war began.

The volunteer brigades were well established. In Edwardian times, the Red Cross and the Order of St John, and their first aid courses, had attracted the attention of many bored upper- and middle-class women. It was something useful that didn't frighten the horses – you learned bandage-rolling and useful tips that added to a wife's or mother's accomplishments. There was also a uniform that was a touch romantic with a hint of the military, a hint of the religious: long blue dress, starched collars and cuffs, a cap with frilly tails; and immediately the war began, someone managed to authorise that the skirts be shortened to a full six inches above the ground! Initially, there was a charge for taking the courses – and for the uniform – which restricted the applicants to those of independent means, and set the tone of "well brought up young ladies" well into the war years.

Dirty work

In 1909, there was some government prescience in the decision to include cooks, laundresses, clerks and drivers in these Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs): moving the wounded, feeding them, administration – the army was not in any way organised for this. The military nurses, serving in the grandly titled Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, were a tiny number: under 300 on the day war broke out, with a reserve of just 200 on call and another 600 civilian nurses available.

The QAs saw themselves as very much part of the military machine, though they had no official status within the armed forces and fruitlessly manoeuvred for years to shift from civilian ranks to recognised military terms – something that time and again has been used to keep women in uniform in an unequal position. They were disciplined and trained, and had to be 25 before joining, indicating that they were serious about their profession and expected respect.

The first week of fighting saw them heading for France with little idea of the mammoth task ahead of them. The initial preparations involved setting up

Nurses as cover stars

The British media played an important role during the Great War in promoting the work of nurses on the home front – which not only helped to recruit more women to the cause, but also afforded these brave medics greater respect among the nation's men.

With their angular good looks and crisp, elegant uniforms, the models on the covers of magazines such as *The Tatler* (pictured) and *The Lady* radiated a kind of virtuous glamour that encouraged many young women to follow in their footsteps to hospitals both at home and in Europe.

And the promotional tactic was even more effective when one of these models just so happened to be an it Girl of the day – this cover of *The Tatler* features Millicent Leveson-Gower, Duchess of Sutherland, who directed field hospitals in both northern France and Belgium during the Great War, and was honoured with the French Croix de Guerre, the Belgian Royal Red Cross and the British Red Cross Medal for her efforts. A role model, indeed!

Mary Evans

military hospitals well behind the lines: within weeks, the scale of the operation exploded, with casualty clearing stations, plans for huge ambulance trains, massive dockside facilities to accommodate injured men to be shipped home, and hospital ships – never mind the demands of military hospitals on the Home Front. Suddenly, the VADs were indispensable

There were 9,000 of them in August 1914 and they scrambled into formation: in every county, large houses were offered as temporary hospitals, recuperation homes and medical centres. Some VADs volunteered for work overseas, but the majority were based at home. Any thought that they might spend the time patting a fevered brow was instantly dispelled as the rail system shunted wounded men across Britain towards their local region Hundreds filled up country manors, smart London houses, requisitioned schools and local hospitals. They had appalling injuries. No one had experienced this kind of medical emergency on home soil – the Boer War, and before that countless military operations in India and the rest of the Empire, were a distant story.

County Red Cross organisations began to build an immense network of 24-hour, seven-days-a-week volunteers, often on shift work. In County Durham alone, 27 hospitals were set up, including ones at Brancepeth Castle and several stately homes, in a drill hall and in the private house next door to my old school. Not only local men were arriving: the country town of Hexham in Northumberland was not a little surprised to receive Belgian and French soldiers as well as English.

The age limit of 21 for UK-based VADs, 23 for those posted abroad, was quickly ignored. Keen teenagers were quick off the mark, with encouragement such as this from *The Lady* magazine: *The fact that one cannot bear arms does not excuse anyone from helping their country's cause by fighting such foes as misery, pain and poverty.* Young women found that this was war work their parents could hardly object to: a caring, traditional role, carried out locally Even so, the professional nursing staff were unimpressed. First aid courses and a squeak of patriotic enthusiasm did not constitute proper training, in their opinion. To add insult to injury, their objections were further quashed by the Joint War Committee – which ran the volunteer system – publishing its decision on the correct way to address the young VAD: "Nurse". No one ever resolved the tension that existed in many wards over the years: dedicated VADs found themselves given most of the dirty work, and at the sharp end of many a professional nursing sister's tongue.

King George V and Queen Mary visit a hospital during the First World War

Mary Evans

Professional nurses found themselves among confident, middle-class girls who used their social skills to cajole and entertain the patients

Seriously disturbed

It wasn't surprising that the influx of "gently bred young ladies" was more than irritating to the trained nurses, many of whom came from much humbler backgrounds and had often found themselves working in hospitals where poverty and Victorian conditions made their lives – and their patients' lives – extremely hard. Maggie Fancy from Dorset was 16 at the start of the war and beginning her nursing training in London. She was paid ten shillings a month "with money taken out for broken thermometers, bent needles (used repeatedly) and soiled uniforms". Collars were so stiff that you couldn't move your head from side to side, and there were no protective gloves – just nail brushes and carbolic soap Nurse Fancy recalled that babies born at home were bathed in a saucepan or frying pan; whatever came to hand – the average newborn in a poor family weighed in at only five or six pounds. The girls were discouraged from turning mattresses (horsehair or straw), due to the bed bugs snuggled underneath. Even so, hygiene and cleanliness were drilled into the trainees

In the voluntary hospitals, professional nurses found themselves among confident, middle-class girls who happily used their social skills to cajole and entertain the patients. Class differences were not merely assumptions of difference: they were barriers that were nearly insurmountable. Bringing flowers from home, offering to write letters, and being able to call on a circle of friends with time and money to provide sweets and cigarettes, soap and bed socks, the VADs were a constant reminder to the paid professionals that there was a vast army of women who did not work and who now beamed with excitement at being called "Nurse". They also got photographed – a lot. Again, they were a blessing for the magazines and illustrated papers that were printing bleak landscapes and the machinery of fighting: here were young ladies in attractive caps helping men on crutches, lighting cigarettes for patients, strolling in gardens, kicking a ball about.

What was also true was the sheer drudgery of hospital work, which no VAD was allowed to avoid: scrubbing, cleaning, emptying slops, laundry and often compulsory attendance at prayers. There was a lengthy list of official instructions to members: uniforms were "to be worn smartly and in a uniform way, and not to suit the taste of each individual .. No additions or alterations, such as furs, veils, bow ties or shirt collars worn over the coat, are permissible." Your uniform was inspected daily and you were told off for any minor infringement. Heaven help the VAD who wanted a little beauty routine: "All powder, paint, scent, earrings or jewellery, etc, should be avoided." Being a minute late occasioned more sharp words. Soiled dressings, bed pans and sputum jars came your way every hour And as wave upon wave of men were conveyed back from France, the ▶

Wounded soldiers are evacuated from France in a hospital train

Rex Features

terribly ma med, the seriously disturbed and the desperate wreckage of those who had been gassed became your daily respons bility. For many of the "n·ce y brought up", th s was not what they had expected. A though much of the ma,or surgery was performed before a patient was sent back to England, there were stil buckets of limbs for the VADs to lug down the corridors, while they were under instruction to "perform all duties cheerfully and thorough·y... be pat ent, will ng and attent ve, and avoid gossip".

Petty restrictions

Neverthe ess, there was the undoubted kudos of doing the one job that the public had decided was the female equivalent of so d ering: these women were vo unteers, they didn't get paid. They weren't challenging the establisned order, for they were merely continuing the tradition of "social work" among the ess fortunate. They weren't like the women who'd headed for the munitions plants or were "doing a man's job" in eng neering or transport. They were in the same mould as the so d er: following the path expected of their sex, and urged by their commandant, Katharine Furse, to give "an example of discipline and perfect steadiness of character". No wonder the VAD assumed an almost mythic pos t on by the end of the war. She wasn't demanding wages or a new kind of job. She was the one who didn't threaten society with change. There were also a large number of them – poss bly more than 70,000. They were encountered by all levels of society, in cities and vil ages. In a world with limited means of spreading an image, mainly by news magaz nes and posters, their smart outfits were ubiquitous, proving what a young woman could do. Though whether she should be doing it hinged entirely on the circumstances provided by war.

Vera was working amid desperate scenes in Etaples, within shelling distance of the frontline and dealing with the victims of gas attacks

W CELEBRITY NURSES
FAMOUS VOLUNTEER AID DETACHMENT NURSES INCLUDE AUTHOR AGATHA CHRISTIE, AVIATOR AMELIA EARHART (BOTH FIRST WORLD WAR) AND ACTRESS HATTIE JACQUES (SECOND WORLD WAR)

The ma n body of VADs served at home – s ogging away for years, scrubb ng and washing, changing dressings and cooking. The experience in many cases was life-changing. It was manual work, full of petty restrictions and a hierarchy in which they were fairly low down the pecking order, despite being addressed as "Nurse". Many encountered working-class men in a way that would have been unthinkab e before the war. Many re·ished the feeling of being wanted, of doing something useful, however menial: it was a far cry from tennis part es, a chaperoned social ife and "mother needing you at home". The VADs found themselves adm red, but every one of them knew how much hard work lurked behind the image. They a so knew that the profess onal nurses had training and that this gave them an edge over the middle-c ass volunteers – even if they were socia y not as "refined". The reality of the working world had come c oser, a lesson for young women who, before the war, had never considered that real "work" m ght be part of their lives.

When Vera Brittain's *Testament Of Youth* was dramatised on Brit sh television in 1979, the most talked-about moment was her father's letter insisting that she return home from France to look after him because her mother had had a breakdown and was in a nursing home. Vera was working amid desperate scenes in Etap es, within shell ng distance of the front ine and dealing with the victims of gas attacks. Her father wrote that it was her duty to return and look after the house· "As your mother and I can no longer manage without you, it is now your duty to leave France immed ate y." That her father thought it his right to order h s 24-year-o d daughter home, and that she complied, produced quite a react on in a TV audience that had just seen a decade of leg slation improving women's legal and economic status.

Those who volunteered to serve abroad encountered the same fr ction with professional nurs ng staff, both mi itary and civilian. Britta n, whose book delivers one of the most unforgettable accounts of serving in France, was no stranger to the hostility but, like her fellow VADs abroad, she experienced the full blast of working in a war zone. At home, there was somet mes more fretting – for obvious reasons – about those who found themselves near the fighting than about the fighting itself. Newspapers carried articles written by women work·ng in tented hospitals, draughty religious buildings and laden hospital trains – main y reassuring descriptions of the contr bution they were trying to make to the war effort. The women made light of the dangers, and so escaped being seen as "adventuresses", their volunteer status giving them a virtuous defence. The press l·ked the word "heroine", which in many cases was well deserved.

Medal for bravery

But what caught the head ines was a particularly grand form of vo·unteer: the titled ladies who decided that they could s nglehandedly run their own medical show. Duchesses and Countesses used clout and formidable fundraising skills to make a cons derable impact on the medical front. Wealthy ind viduals started their own establishments: Lady Carnarvon immediately converted Highclere Cast e in Hampshire and wondered if the dozens of beds wou d be fi ed: by Christmas, the vast house (the setting for TV's *Downton Abbey*) was full to bursting. This wasn't surprising as, in the next few months, the casualties from across the Channe reached a rate of 24,000 a week. The Duchess of Sutner and took her own band of doctors and nurses to France, barged through enemy lines, talked her way back to England and set off again to organise a hosp tal at Calais; the Duchess of Westminster set up a hospital at Le Touquet, complete with her wolfhound and a group of her friends, who graced the wards every night in full evening dress and tiaras to cheer everyone up. Lady Paget made it to Serbia, set up a 600-bed medical unit in Skop,e, ignored the enemy Bulgarian troops descend·ng on the town and, with her staff, cont nued to nurse as a prisoner of war. The Dowager Countess of Carnarvon was busy organ·sing nurses to be sent to her in Egypt and, during the

TopFoto

Gallipoli campaign, held possibly one of the more exotic posts of any woman in the war: Co-ordinator of Hospital Ships, Alexandria – where Lady Howard de Walden was supervising her own hospital, despite hostility from the army's medical service. Lady Dorothie Feilding, daughter of the Earl of Denbigh, went with the Munro Ambulance Corps to France one month into the war and spent nearly four years driving the wounded under fire; for her bravery, she became the first woman to be awarded the Military Medal.

Horrendous conditions

These women's exploits gained admiration, though there's no mistaking the classic words that attend the commendations from press and public: they were all "splendid" and they showed "pluck". The imagination, the determination and the sheer bloody-mindedness that their exploits demanded were not to the fore in published comment. Organisational ability, allied with financial skills and vast reserves of energy, seemed to be taken for granted, and it was too much to ment on courage – that was a soldierly attribute. The language had yet to absorb terms that could be used of women when describing the customary preserve of men. These were early days. And after a century, there are still skirmishes in the linguistic field: men are ambitious, women are pushy; men are forthright, women are strident; and so on through a long list – though at least "plucky" seems to have lost ground.

Reading the reports and memoirs of women who took charge of large numbers of volunteers – often in horrendous conditions – commandeered buildings, acquired equipment and stores, set up administrative systems, ran their own transport, and delivered food, treatment and, above all, care, it does not take any stretch of the imagination to see that large parts of the British war machine would have been as well, if not better, run if these women had been in charge

Staff and patients in Ward A13 of the No 2 War Hospital, Reading, Berkshire

Mary Evans

WBRITTAIN BLACKLISTED

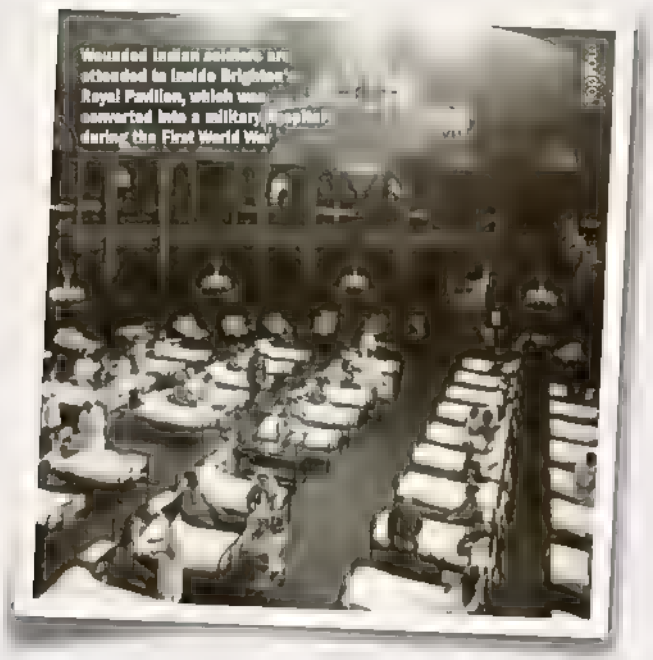
VERA BRITTAIN WAS AMONG 2,820 NAMES FEATURED IN *THE BLACK BOOK* – A LIST, COMPILED BY THE NAZIS, OF PEOPLE WHO SHOULD BE ARRESTED IN THE EVENT OF A SUCCESSFUL INVASION OF BRITAIN

In a daughter's letter to her mother just a few weeks into the war, those sentiments were eloquently expressed. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, 78, probably knew more about prejudice against professional working women than anyone else, having overcome an entire steeplechase of obstacles to qualify and work as a doctor – the first woman to do so in Britain. Her daughter, Louisa, had followed her into the profession and was also an ardent Suffragette – her mother's sister, Millicent Garrett Fawcett, was the leader of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. Clever, campaigning and capable, these women knew how to seize opportunities, and the French Embassy in London found Louisa and another doctor and Suffragette, Flora Murray, on the doorstep immediately war broke out. They were all too aware that the British military were set against women doctors; indeed, the medical profession generally was still none too welcoming. The women believed the French might be more receptive to their offers of help, for their army medical service was known to be in dire straits.

A monastic world

The conversation in the Embassy proceeded rather haphazardly, due to much enthusiasm and poor French, but somewhere along the line the right signals seem to have been exchanged. On 15 September, Elizabeth waved off her daughter and a small group of volunteers at Victoria Station, saying, "I would be going with you if I was 20 years younger." When Louisa reached Paris later that day, she sent a brief note home: "This is just what you would have done at my age. I hope that I shall be able to do it half as well as you would have done."

Three days later, Louisa and her Women's Hospital Corps (WHC) team were still trying to juggle turning the newly built, empty Hotel Claridge in Paris into something resembling a medical facility, while already performing operations in the part-converted ladies' cloakroom, using fish kettles to sterilise instruments. Louisa was in her element, already with 68 patients: *We have a lot of surgery sometimes, I am in theatre from two until nine or ten at night, and have eight or more operations. The cases come to us very septic and the wounds are terrible... I wish the whole organisation for the wounded – their transport, the disposition of base and field hospitals, and their clothing and feeding, could be put in the hands of women. This is not military work. It is merely a matter of organisation, common sense, attention to detail, and determination to avoid unnecessary suffering and loss of life. Medical women could do it so much better than it is done,* ►


Wounded Indian soldiers are attended to inside Brighton's Royal Pavilion, which was converted into a military hospital during the First World War

Dorothie Feilding

Born in Rusthall Feilding, the Ninth Earl of Denbigh, Dorothie shunned her aristocratic background when the opportunity arose to help out with the war effort.

After a short training course at Rugby Hospital, she set off for the battlefields of Belgium, where she began working for the Munro Ambulance Corps, transporting wounded soldiers from frontline positions between Ypres and Dixmude to the hospitals at Furnes. Such was her heroism in the field that she received the French Croix de Guerre. The accompanying high praise by Commander Henry Crosby Malahan led to Feilding being awarded the Military Medal for Bravery on 1 September 1916 – the first woman to receive the honour.

Feilding served in Flanders until 1917 and died in 1935 aged 46.

especially if the right medical women were chosen for the job – ahem! We have a scheme already and are gradually breaking it to the old officers who come round to see us. We are having a wonderful time. I hope we will be able to do the job well. Very much love, dearest mother Yours, LGA.

The wounded from the first Battle of the Marne were the initial challenge: the women rose to it, even though the kind of surgery they were performing wasn't anything they had experienced. Until then, gynaecological cases and children's ailments had been considered their area of expertise; there were many fusty professors in the medical schools who believed that women should not look upon men's bodies, never mind interfere with them medically. When they qualified, it was rare that women even got to treat a man. And such views were not confined to the professionals: there were just over 500 qualified women doctors in the whole of Britain in 1914, and many people had never encountered one. The Army, living in its monastic world, was even less familiar with the female medic of the species.

Sick British servicemen in Belgium are readied to be shipped home

Wonderful opportunity

The general public was not even 100 per cent happy about professional nurses, but at least they were in a traditional role for a woman – who always obeyed the doctor. Having a woman usurp that senior role, which involved personal questions, peering under the bedclothes, decision-making and prescribing treatment, was not to be contemplated, particularly if you were feeling terrible. Such attitudes did not disappear in a trice merely because there was a war on. However, as an injured soldier, you didn't have any choice: you were lucky to get away from the battlefield and this was not the time to be picky. The new and unavoidable factor was that the injuries were horrendous.

Added to which, in the early days of the war, it took time to get casualties to relative safety. Roads and transport behind the frontline were in chaos. No one had ever had to cope with such numbers of badly wounded men. There was dirt everywhere, wounds turned septic and first aid was rudimentary or non-existent. Amputation was still often the only way of saving life. Surgery, by anyone's standards, was a brutal job. That women should be doing it was nothing less than a sensation. The activities in the Hotel Claridge were tapped up by the French press, who sent a journalist to see for himself the lady surgeon in the operating theatre. He was reported to have exited shouting that it was all true – he'd seen the knife in her hand!

MARY IS TWICE LUCKY

NURSE MARY ROBERTS WAS AMONG THE SURVIVORS WHEN THE HOSPITAL SHIP ROHILLA SANK IN 1914. SHE HAD ALSO SURVIVED THE SINKING OF THE TITANIC TWO YEARS EARLIER

In early 1915, the WHC shifted to a château at Wimereux, near Boulogne, and achieved a subtle development – the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) had gritted its teeth and made overtures to the women. Wimereux became the first women's hospital recognised by the British Army. It was a victory, but one that had depended on the Surgeon General himself, who had become aware of the Paris hospital's reputation. The rest of his vast staff were yet to be won over, and a considerable number of them never budged in their attitudes. This became clear as the biggest challenge yet was put before the WHC: would they run a large hospital in London – over 500 beds – for the military? The doctors, as elegantly as they could, grabbed with both hands.

There were other hospitals run by women in Britain – the first being the New Hospital for Women in London's Euston Road, founded by Louisa's mother, Elizabeth. But she herself was to run a military establishment – which meant that acceptance had been achieved on a different level. Not that the building resembled a step up in the world. Returning from France, Flora Murray found herself inspecting a ghastly old workhouse in Endell Street, Bloomsbury, said to have been the model for the workhouse in Dickens' *Oliver Twist*.

The building was not encouraging, nor was the RAMC Colonel in charge of converting it: "Good God, women!" He was probably very much aware that these were a particular breed as well: Suffragettes. As the workhouse was reconfigured and the equipment arrived, there was no doubting that the female staff were card-carrying members of the Votes for Women brigade. Louisa Garrett Anderson had served a month in prison for breaking a window. Flora Murray had joined demonstrations, treated those roughed up by the Police and tended women who had been force-fed in prison. Members of the women's movement headed like moths to a flame to join the hospital: it was a wonderful opportunity. It had to be a success, and it was.

Vilified and despised

One of the orderlies summed up the core message of her training. "We had this drilled into us: you not only have to do a good job but you have to do a *superior* job. What would be accepted from a man will not be accepted from a woman. You have got to do better." A sentiment that is still recognised by many working women today. The Army, wondering what they had started, had a strong feeling that the whole enterprise would soon collapse under a heap of bandages and petticoats. They decided that arm's-length association was the best approach, and left the running entirely to the women, unwittingly cementing Endell Street's independent and individual character.

Coping with the stream of patients, flat-out with work, the WHC started to deliver innovations and strategies of their own. War frequently accelerates improvements in medical techniques and, in 1916, having employed their own pathologist and begun research in their laboratory, they were the first hospital to run clinical trials of BIPP. This antiseptic paste, first introduced by Dr James Rutherford Morison in one of the Northumberland VAD hospitals, is still around today. That women should be innovating and writing up their results in official reports again broke new ground: getting published in *The Lancet* meant a great deal in the profession.

Florence Farmborough

She may not be as well-known as her namesake Florence Nightingale, but Florence Farmborough enjoyed an equally remarkable career. Born in Buckinghamshire in 1887, the fourth of six children, she went to live in Russia at the age of 21, where she worked as a governess for a family in Kiev and taught the children to speak English.

When the First World War erupted, she began working as a nurse for the Russian Army and saw service on both the Galician and Rumanian Fronts. Fascinated by the events developing around her, she always carried a diary and a plate camera, with which she made records of the conflict (the diary extracts formed the basis of a book, *Nurse At The Russian Front*, published in 1974).

Following the October Revolution, Farmborough returned to Britain and, on her journey, began writing accounts of her time in the battlefield, which were subsequently published in The Times.

During the Spanish Civil War in the late 1930s, she worked as an English-speaking newsreader on Spanish national radio, before returning to Britain and working for the Women's Voluntary Service during the Battle Of Britain. Prior to her death in 1978 aged 91, she became an honorary life member of the British Red Cross.

All of this encouraged a warmer public view of the Suffragette movement. Here were people who had formerly been objects of much public opprobrium and derision; not only were they proving to be capable professionals, equal to men in their skill, but they were behaving as respectable and responsible members of society. It's easy to forget how much the years just before the war had seen women vilified and despised when they undertook violent protest. In an atmosphere where violence and destruction on a huge scale now overshadowed everyone's lives, a few cases of arson and window-smashing seemed to fade. Endell Street also began to attract very favourable comment from those who had been treated there.

Charitable act

Some 26,000 men – and a few of the women in the service units formed in 1917 – were treated in the hospital. Dr Murray claimed that only one man had ever announced that he didn't wish to be admitted to a hospital run by female staff: the story goes that he changed his mind and "sent his mother to ask that he might remain". The press spent a good deal of time trotting around the wards, with *The Daily Sketch* breathlessly running a headline after the Somme offensive that read *Wounded men in hospital staffed by women more anxious to praise doctors than to talk of the big push*. The many visitors (it became fashionable to see this curious institution) remarked on the flowers and other feminine touches in the wards, as well as the cheerful and sympathetic atmosphere, that felt "just like home". Nor was this incidental: like many other intelligent women who were working with injured men, the staff at Endell Street were recognising the need for something more than surgery and medicines.

Across the country, many of the VADs soon learned that talking and listening were not luxuries for their patients. There were countless cases of men whose bodily injuries didn't seem so serious, but who were clearly in a terrible state and not getting better. Severe attitudes to "malingerers" and those considered to have a "lack of moral fibre" were still prevalent. "Shell-shock" wasn't recognised at the start of the war and was perplexing doctors with a range of disturbing symptoms. Mental-health treatment was still in its infancy – the very building the WHC were inhabiting still contained the workhouse's fearsome "lunacy block" when they first moved in. Treating the whole person was not an automatic concept. Providing "comforts" and entertainment was understood as a charitable act; now there was a growing understanding that psychological problems were causing a great deal of concern alongside the physical wounds.

Rex Features

There were countless cases of men whose bodily injuries didn't seem so serious but who were in a terrible state and not getting better

Louisa wrote to her mother: *I like still more the opportunity of being a little good to these bruised men. Their minds are full of horrors, and it is a help to them to come into a soothing atmosphere with decent food and soft beds and our gentle, merry young orderly girls, who feed them with cigarettes and write to their mothers and read to them... We are going to have Scotch songs tomorrow instead of hymns, and I fear even a gramophone may appear... All the men are shocked by what they have been through, and normal comforts and little pleasures are a help to them, and make them sleep and forget a little.*

Ground-breaking work

The Endell Street hospital was instrumental in introducing the idea of men being treated by women: it hardly seems revolutionary, but its rejection hitherto was probably the greatest barrier to women fulfilling their professional role and using their training to best advantage. Their ground-breaking work in surgery and interest in psychology would take years to be fully developed. Even today, there are divisions of labour within the medical world and battles within the hierarchies. In spite of their immense success, the women running the military hospital were still refused any kind of rank. Status means power. Ability didn't equate with authority. The former Suffragettes knew this but had expected their efforts to generate a greater acceptance into the wider world of medicine.

Their patients had no doubts: according to one young Australian soldier, in a letter to his father: *The Women's Hospital Corps hospital is the best in London. The management is good, and the surgeons take great interest in, and pains with, their patients... The whole hospital is a triumph for women and, incidentally, it is a triumph for Suffragettes.*

Rex Features

A funeral takes place for a nurse killed during an air raid on a British base near Etaples, France, May 1918

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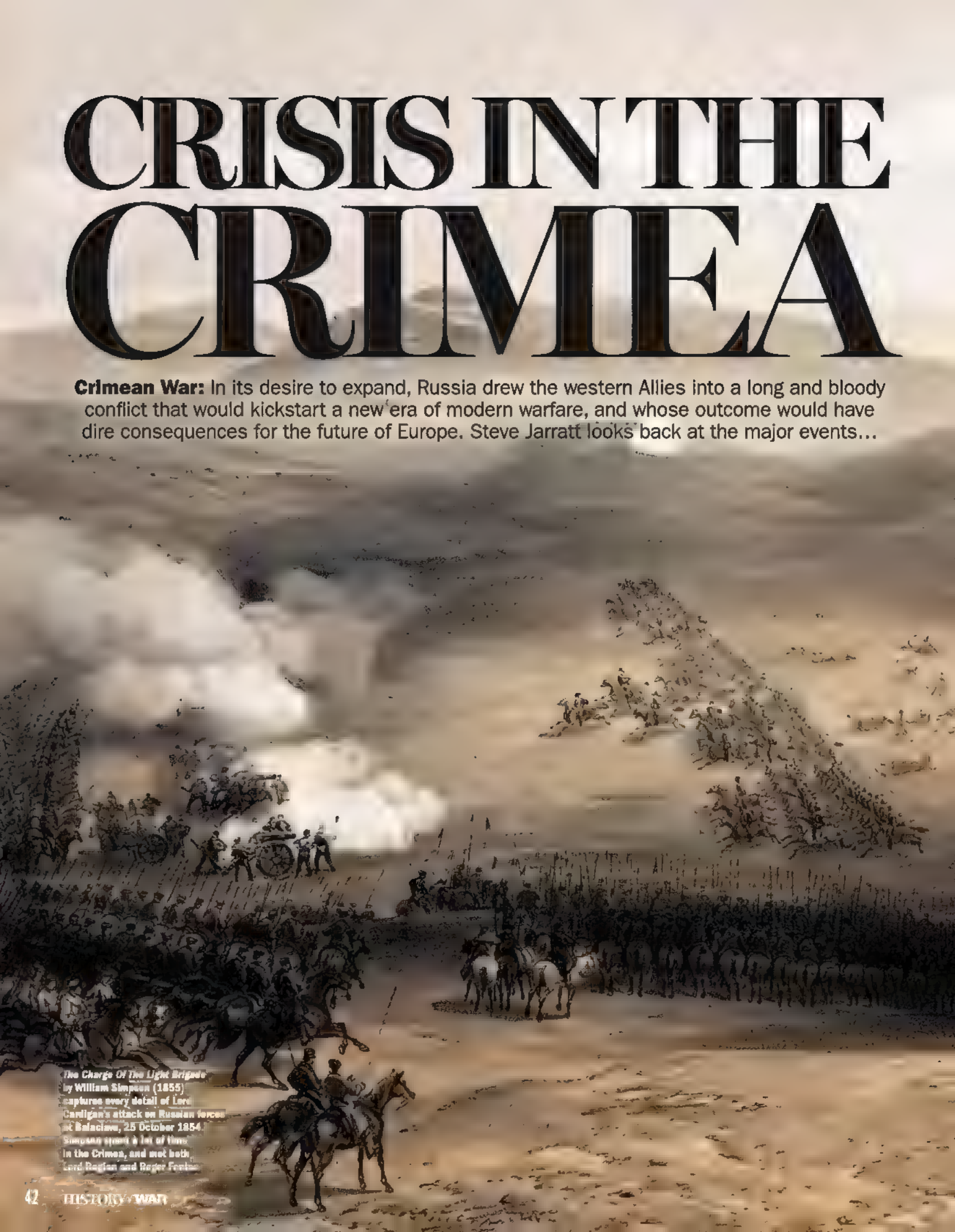
CRISIS IN THE CRIMEA

Crimean War: In its desire to expand, Russia drew the western Allies into a long and bloody conflict that would kickstart a new era of modern warfare, and whose outcome would have dire consequences for the future of Europe. Steve Jarratt looks back at the major events...



The Charge Of The Light Brigade by William Simpson (1855) captures every detail of Lord Cardigan's attack on Russian forces at Balaclava, 25 October 1854. Simpson spent a lot of time in the Crimea, and met both Lord Raglan and Roger Fenton

In 1853, war was declared between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, whose efforts were supported six months later by an alliance of Britain, France and Austria. Professor Andrew Lambert, a naval historian of King's College London, sums up the action as "a war to see whether Britain or Russia was top dog in the world. As it turned out, it wasn't the Russians."

The conflict is notable for several reasons: it's generally regarded as the first "modern war", distinguished by its employment of the very latest technologies – for the first time, troops employed mass-produced firearms, exploding shells, sea mines and "ironclad" vessels with long-range guns. Meanwhile, warm clothing was designed to protect the troops through the bitter cold Crimean winters: one named after Lord Cardigan, the other after the British base in Balaclava.

BACKSTORY
With the Ottoman Empire's best days behind it, the Russians under Tsar Nicholas I sensed an opportunity to expand their own interests. But the countries of western Europe – particularly Britain and France – formed an alliance to quell the threat.

Railways became an important tool in military operations, as did the telegraph, with the British and French laying lines from their Crimean bases back to London and Paris, respectively. Not only did political leaders now have a most immediate access to their commanders in the field, but the public was also informed of activities on a daily basis. Thanks to the efforts of *The Times* reporter William H Russell and photographer Roger Fenton, the action overseas was well documented – a factor that would eventually help bring down the British Government.

The conflict is generally regarded as the first "modern war", distinguished by its employment of the very latest technologies

When London chef Alexis Soyer visited the frontline, he realised that British troops were dying of malnutrition and food poisoning, thanks to burnt or undercooked meat. He patented his portable Soyer stove – which the Army used for the next hundred years – and ensured that every regiment had its own cook. In his book *Soyer's Culinary Campaign*, he wrote, "War is the evil genius of a time, but good food for all is a daily and paramount necessity."

The Crimean War is also famous for its introduction of professional nursing, with women like Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole caring for the British wounded. Meanwhile, on the Russian side, surgeon Nikolai Pirogov organised female volunteers to work as field nurses, and pioneered the use of anaesthetics and plaster casts on the battlefield.

Sir Henry Bessemer designed a new type of artillery shell containing spiral grooves, ▶

which made the shell spin and fly more accurately. When the cannon of the time proved unable to cope with the shell, he pioneered his famous Bessemer Converter, producing high strength steel at a rate sufficient, and affordable enough, to be used in the manufacture of stronger barrels. He never did make the shells, but instead revolutionised the steel industry and became incredibly wealthy in the process

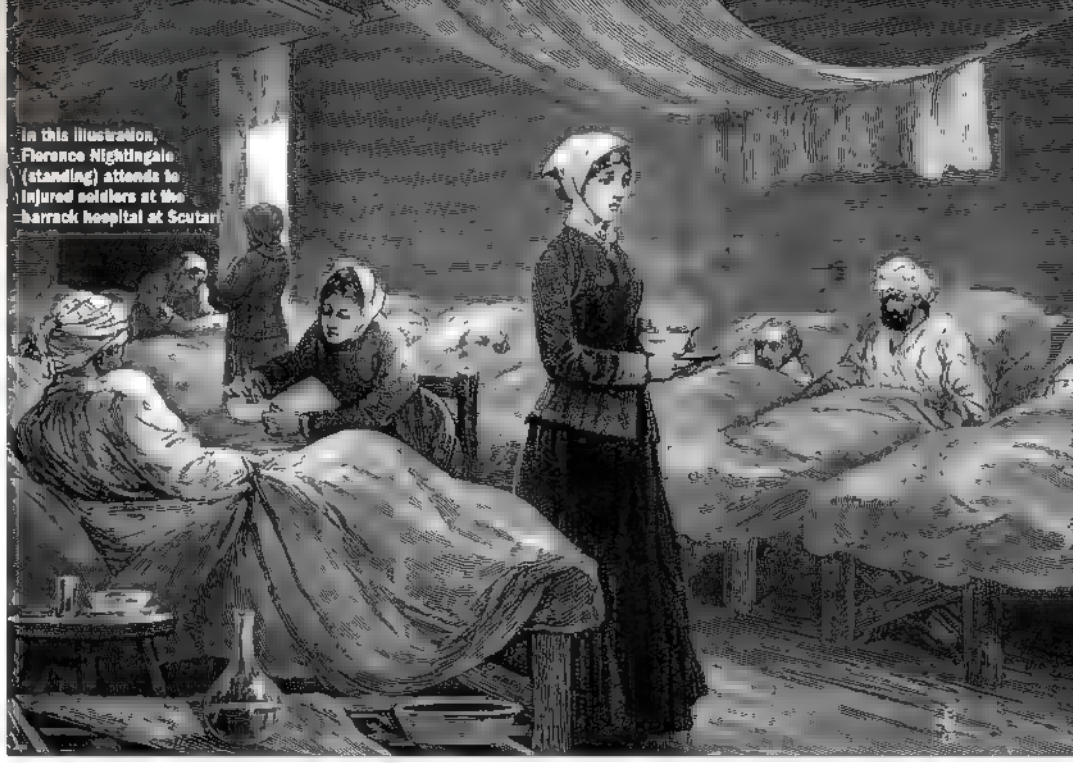
String of defeats

The origin of the war can be traced back to the decline of the Ottoman-Turkish Empire, which was famously referred to by Tsar Nicholas I as "the sick man of Europe". The Empire had suffered a string of defeats at the hands of Russia and Austria, and was rapidly falling behind the industrialised European nations. Its religious leadership hampered attempts at reform, and its principalities in the Balkans – Serbia, Montenegro, Wallachia, Moldovia – actively sought independence.

The country standing to benefit the most from the break-up of the Ottoman Empire was Russia, which had been busy expanding southwards and looked to gain a foothold in the Black Sea. This would give it access to warm water ports – many of its seaports in the north were blocked by ice for long periods, preventing trade and the growth of its navy. Russia had already defeated the Cossacks and Tartars in Ukraine, and was now on Turkey's doorstep

But the catalyst for war – as is so often the case – was the clash of religious beliefs. Frictions between Catholic France and Orthodox Russia came to a head over the control of religious sites in the Holy Land. French President Napoleon III demanded that the Turks place the holy sites in Palestine under the power of the Roman Catholic Church; the Turks then awarded the Russians the right to protect the same places under Orthodox control. Confrontations between rival clergy led to riots, and, blaming the Turks, Tsar Nicholas I insisted the issue be resolved in favour of the Orthodox Church. When Sultan Abdülmecid I refused (with persuasion from the British Ambassador Stratford Canning), Nicholas ordered his army to mobilise.

Britain could not stand by and let Russia become the dominant force in the Balkans.



In this illustration, Florence Nightingale (standing) attends to injured soldiers at the barrack hospital at Scutari

In June, fearing for the safety of its trade routes and passage to India, the British fleet arrived in the Dardanelles (the strait that connects the Aegean Sea to the Sea of Marmara), where it was joined by the French fleet.

A month later, 80,000 Russian troops, under the command of Field Marshal Ivan Paskevich and General Mikhail Gorchakov, crossed the River Pruth into Ottoman-held Moldavia. The

Frictions between Catholic France and Orthodox Russia came to a head over the control of religious sites in the Holy Land

forces spent several months occupying Moldavia and neighbouring Wallachia (then known as the Danubian Principalities).

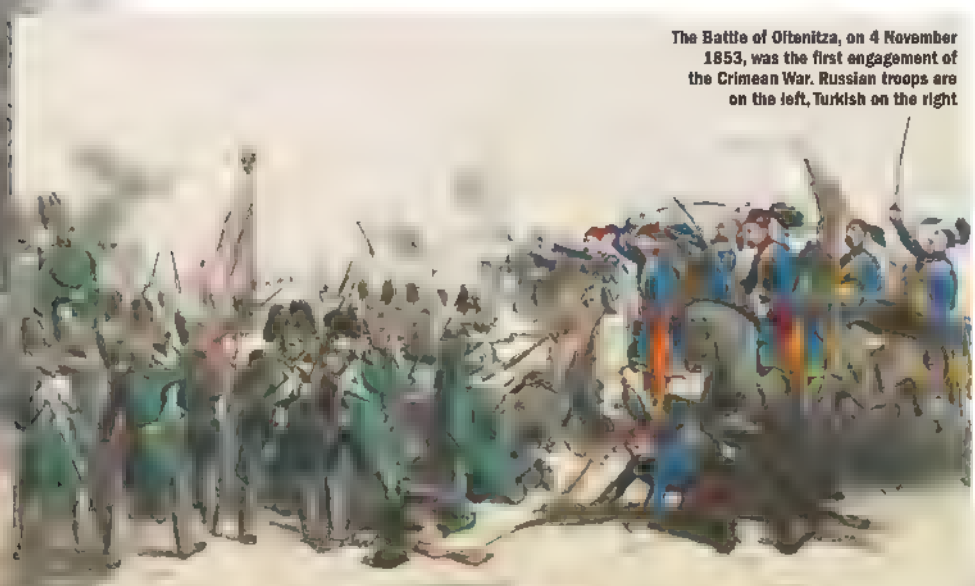
However, the action wasn't an attempt at territorial gains, but merely a move to pressure the Sultan into acceding to the Tsar's demands. Nicholas expected no hostile response from Britain or France, and assumed the old enemies would never ally – but he hadn't factored in France's belligerent new President or Britain's concern over Russian expansionism. And after helping Austria put down the Hungarian revolution of 1848, he also expected assistance from Austria. He was wrong on all counts

At first, the major neutral powers in Europe did attempt to end the situation diplomatically: Britain, France, Austria-Hungary and Prussia – forerunner to the German Empire – met in Vienna with Russia and Turkey to draft a proposed solution. The resulting "Vienna Note" was met with approval by Nicholas, who didn't want a war, but Abdulmecid thought its terms too open to interpretation and rejected it. Proposed amendments were in turn spurned by the Russians.

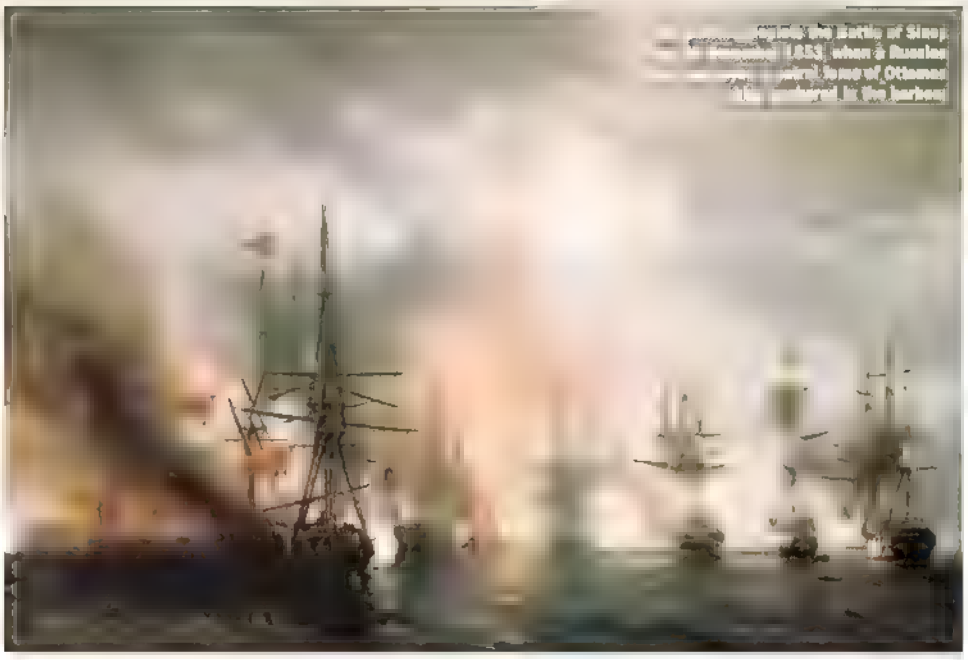
Had the European nations put joint military pressure on Turkey to accept, the war would have ended right there. But they all had their own agendas in the region and were unable to co-operate. The Sultan was left to follow his own policies, and Turkey declared war on Russia on 5 October 1853. By pure coincidence, a small Anglo-French fleet entered the Dardanelles soon after, to protect the Sultan from rebellion. The Russians viewed this as support for the Turks, and provided them with cause for retaliation.

The first engagement occurred on 4 November, when 10,000 soldiers of the Ottoman army under General Omar Pasha occupied the town of Oltenitza on the banks of the Danube. They then moved north to capture a fort at Turtukai, with the intention of taking Bucharest, severing the supply lines of Russian troops fighting at Calafat on the eastern banks of the Danube.

A contingent of 15,000 Russian soldiers commanded by General Peter Andreivich Dannenburg counter-attacked the Turks at Turtukai, but were repelled by the fort's guns and took heavy casualties – more than 600 dead and 3,000 wounded, to just a handful of



The Battle of Oltenitza, on 4 November 1853, was the first engagement of the Crimean War. Russian troops are on the left, Turkish on the right



Turkish losses. However, in anticipation of heavy reinforcements, Pasha decided to fall back, and his forces returned across the Danube.

On 30 November, the Russian Black Sea fleet based at Sevastopol met the Turkish fleet in the Battle of Sinop, a seaport in northern Anatolia. The Russian fleet under Admiral Pavel Nakhimov consisted of six warships, two frigates and three armed steamers. Approaching the Turks in two columns, they brought to bear some 700 guns.

The Ottoman squadron of seven frigates, three corvettes and two steamers had been sheltering in the port when the Russians were spotted. Admiral Osman Pasha called for reinforcements, suggesting that "the Imperial fleet may incur disaster", but his calls remained unheeded. When ordered to surrender, Osman refused and fired upon the Russians. The Russian fleet approached in two columns, dropped anchor and unleashed a vicious barrage. In the ensuing battle, 11 of the 12 Turkish ships were destroyed, or purposefully run aground by their crew to avoid sinking, with only one 12-gun steamer escaping unscathed.

With the Ottoman squadron annihilated, the Russians then targeted the on-shore gun batteries and destroyed them. Osman Pasha was captured and the Turks lost 3,000 soldiers killed or wounded to less than 300 casualties on the Russian side. The Battle of Sinop also proved notable as the last major engagement by wooden warships, which rapidly fell out of fashion, to be replaced by armoured, steam-driven "ironclads".

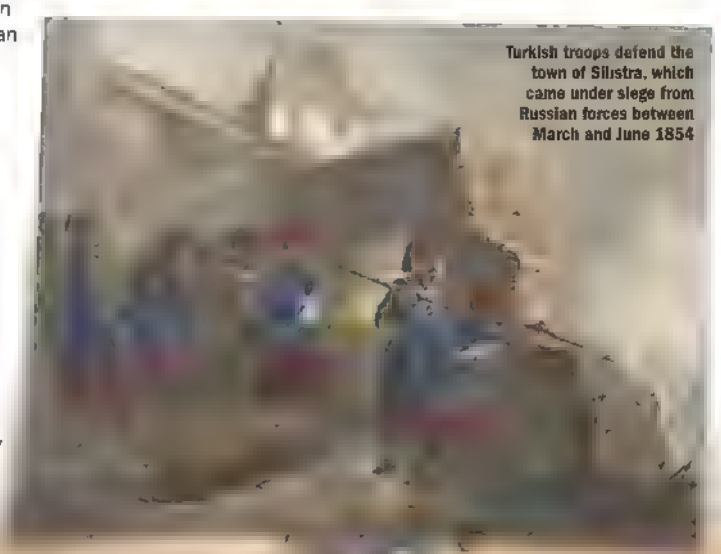
At the beginning of 1854, there were several actions, notably when the Russians began laying siege to the town of Calafat – which would continue until May – and a victory for the Turks at the Battle of Caracal.

The conflict sparked outcry in Britain, with concerns that Russia could justifiably overrun Turkey and gain control of the region. Meanwhile, the French, led by a new President eager for military glory, were keen to avenge their defeat at the hands of Russia in 1812. The British Government of Lord Aberdeen was divided over the question of all-out war, and it took four months for it to decide to intervene. In March 1854, Britain and France declared war and demanded that Russia leave the Danubian Principalities.

Skilled marksmen

Following a lull in campaigning over the winter, Russian forces invaded the Turkish province of Dobruja, between the lower Danube and the Black Sea, and advanced west until they halted at Trajan's Wall, a medieval fortified earthen dyke. In April, 90,000 men under Field Marshal Ivan Paskevich besieged the fortress town of Silistra, 30 miles west. After some initial success, the Russians – despite their numbers and 266 cannons – were unable to rout the 18,000 Ottoman troops encamped there.

Fearful of Russia's presence in the area, Austria had amassed some 280,000 troops on its borders with Moldovia. This dissuaded the Russians from attacking the town of Vidin, which sits opposite Calafat on the Danube. The heavily fortified town had a garrison of around ▶



Turkish troops defend the town of Silistra, which came under siege from Russian forces between March and June 1854

Crimea timeline

1853

2 MARCH
Russian ambassador Prince Alexander Menshikov arrives in Constantinople with demands from Nicholas I.

31 MAY
Russia delivers its ultimatum to Turkey.

5 JUNE
The British fleet approaches the Dardanelles.

5 OCTOBER
Turkey declares war on Russia.

4 NOVEMBER
The Turks defeat the Russians at Oltenitza.

30 NOVEMBER
An Ottoman patrol fleet is destroyed at the Battle of Sinop.

1854

6 JANUARY
Russian forces invade the Dobruja region.

28 MARCH
Britain and France declare war on Russia.

23 JUNE
The Russians abandon the siege of Silistra.

13 AUGUST
The Allies besiege the Finnish fortress of Bomarsund.

14 SEPTEMBER
The Allies land in Crimea at Calamita Bay.

20 SEPTEMBER
The Battle of the Alma takes place between Russia and the Allies.

29 SEPTEMBER
The British arrive in Balaclava.

17 OCTOBER
The first bombardment of Sevastopol.

1855

17 JANUARY
Russia's relief force attacks Eupatoria but is repulsed by Ottoman forces.

31 JANUARY
Lord Aberdeen resigns as British Prime Minister.

2 MARCH
Nicholas I dies. He is succeeded by Nicholas II.

9 APRIL
The second bombardment of Sevastopol.

25 MAY
The Allies capture the city of Kerch.

6 JUNE
The third bombardment of Sevastopol.

17 JUNE
The fourth bombardment of Sevastopol.

29 JUNE
Lord Raglan dies.

16 AUGUST
Russian forces are defeated by French and Sardinian troops at Chernaya.

17 AUGUST
The fifth bombardment of Sevastopol.

5 SEPTEMBER
The sixth bombardment of Sevastopol.

9 SEPTEMBER
The Russians evacuate Sevastopol.

6 NOVEMBER
Omar Pasha defeats the Russians at the River Ingur.

1856

16 JANUARY
Nicholas II accepts Austria's demands.

30 MARCH
The Treaty of Paris is signed.

The siege of Sevastopol lasted a whole year, from September 1854 to September 1855, and saw the Allies march towards the Crimean capital. Crimean soldier Leo Tolstoy wrote about the episode in *The Sevastopol Sketches*

War in the Baltic

While public attention was focused on the battles that raged in the Balkans, there was also plenty of action taking place in the Baltic Sea. In April 1854, an Anglo-French fleet was sent to nullify the threat posed by the Russian Baltic fleet, which was stationed at Kronstadt, a seaport on Kotlin Island that sits just 19 miles west of St Petersburg, the then-capital of Russia.

The British fleet, commanded by Admiral Sir Charles Napier, consisted of 49 ships and was the largest since the Napoleonic Wars. Though it was ill-suited to the conditions and lacked experienced crew, it managed to blockade Russia's ports in the Gulf of Finland and kept the Baltic fleet moored for the duration of hostilities.

In August, three British ships bombarded the fortress at Bomarsund in the Åland Islands, and received return fire. A live shell landed on the deck of HMS Hecla, at which point the ship's mate, Charles Davis Lucas, grabbed it and threw it overboard, preventing serious loss of life. Lucas was immediately promoted to Acting Lieutenant and became the first man to receive the Victoria Cross for gallantry.

The Britons' initial assault was indecisive, so a fleet of 25 ships, supported by French infantry, made a second attack in the middle of August. The fort was systematically bombarded over four days, until the Russian commander surrendered. The remnants of the fort were then demolished.

A less-successful attack took place against the heavily fortified Sveaborg dockyards outside the Finnish capital of Helsinki a year later. Some 77 ships of the Allied Baltic fleet lay two miles offshore, out of range of the fort's obsolete artillery. Over the course of two days, the ships' arsenal of some 1,000 guns fired more than 20,000 shells, but failed to destroy their target.

10,000 and held a strategically important location along the Danube line.

Austria attempted to mediate a peace agreement between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, but eventually intervened in support of the Turks. In June, under increasing pressure from the Austrians, and in accordance with demands from the Allies, Nicholas I ordered his troops to leave the Danubian provinces – the siege of Silistra was lifted on 23 June, just hours before a major assault was due to take place.

Omar Pasha's forces followed the Russians' retreat across the Danube and engaged them at the village of Giurgiu. The French also attacked the remaining forces in Dobruja but were unsuccessful. With the Russian withdrawal complete, the Austrians moved in to act as a neutral buffer zone between the warring factions.

By the end of July 1854, Nicholas I's forces had abandoned the Danubian Principalities as requested, and the war may well have ended at that point. However, the press in Britain and France had whipped public fervour into such a frenzy that it overawed the political will to cease hostilities. And so the Allied troops, who had been stationed in Varna on the Bulgarian coast since June, were transported across the Black Sea. In September, the soldiers disembarked at Calamita Bay on the Crimean peninsula, with the intention of besieging the city of Sevastopol, home of the Russian Black Sea fleet.

The force moved north-west to set up base in the coastal city of Eupatoria, and protect its left flank, before heading south. To reach Sevastopol, the army had to cross four rivers – the Bulganek, the Alma, the Katcha and the Belbek – and the Russians decided to make their stand from the hills overlooking the Alma on 20 September.

The Tsar's forces were commanded by Prince Alexander Menshikov, and constituted around 33,000 infantry, 3,400 cavalry and 120 guns, which, positioned atop steep slopes overlooking the south bank of the river, gave the Russians a distinct advantage. On the northern bank were the combined forces of Britain, France and Turkey – some 60,000 infantry, 1,000 cavalry and 132 guns.

With French naval support, two brigades under General Pierre Bosquet moved up a coastal path on the west to a site named Telegraph Hill. They routed the Russian forces on their left flank, but needed artillery to advance further, which was delayed due to the terrain. This gave the Russians time to redeploy and return fire.

The British, under the command of Lord Raglan, began to move forward in two huge lines comprising four divisions. As the first line of troops struggled up the slope, they met a mass of Russian infantry coming down. However, the British were skilled marksmen using the latest rifles with the spin-stabilised Minié ball, and could fell a man at 1,200 paces. By comparison, the aged muskets of the Russians weren't effective until 300 paces. Face to face, it was no contest and the Russians dispersed.

Missed opportunity

Despite coming under artillery fire, the British made it up the slope and overran two Russian redoubts, scattering the troops and capturing the guns. But the victory was short-lived, as the Russians sent a large column to counter attack. With reinforcements of the 1st Division yet to cross the river, the British troops began to withdraw, and it was only cannon fire from a pair of British nine-pounder guns on Telegraph Hill that prevented further Russian advances.

A huge wave of Russian troops poured down the slopes, scattering the men of the Welch Fusiliers, who in turn ran into the Scots Fusilier Guards, splitting the British advance in two. Sensing an opportunity, the Russians sent two battalions into the gap, but were repelled by flanking fire from the Grenadiers, allowing the Coldstream Guards to close the line. The Russians retreated and the British continued forward to retake the redoubts, quashing Russian defences to the west.

The press in Britain and France had whipped public fervour into such a frenzy that it overawed the political will to cease hostilities

To the east, the Russians had a line of 10,000 men facing just three battalions of the Highland Brigade, two ranks deep. But the thick smoke of the battlefield hid the Brigade's true strength; believing their number to be greater, the Russians fell back. With their guns finally in position, the French took Telegraph Hill and the battle was effectively over. By the end of the day, the Allies had over 3,300 killed or wounded, while the Russians had lost 1,800 men with 3,700 wounded. And though the Allies were successful, the battle revealed flaws in the British military, with poor decision-making, a lack of consistency between regimental operations, and minimal coordination between infantry and artillery.

With the Russians retreating en masse, Raglan suggested to the French commander General Saint Arnaud that the Allies should march the 15 miles to Sevastopol. But the Frenchman declined, stating that vital supplies

were still on the northern bank of the river. It's now generally regarded that this was a missed opportunity for the Allies, enabling the Russians to regroup, resupply and prepare their defences.

The Allies decided to bypass Sevastopol on the east coast, in favour of finding a sheltered harbour where they could bring in supplies and their heavy siege guns. And so, on 26 September, the Allied forces set up bases along the Chersonese peninsula. Under yet more poor advisement, the British selected the small fishing port of Balaclava, while the French occupied Kamiesh in the west. Not only did this port have better facilities, but defence of the entire Allied force now fell to the British.

Terrible damage

The Allies built a series of emplacements surrounding the south of Sevastopol, with redoubts for the gun batteries and trenches for cover. Then, on 17 October, they began bombarding Sevastopol in a siege that would last a whole year.

However, Prince Menshikov had moved the bulk of his forces away from the city to the north-east, where he would await reinforcements from the Danubian front. In their wake remained some 4,500 militia, 2,700 gunners, 4,400 marines, 18,500 seamen and 5,000 workmen – a combined force of more than 35,000 men. Even though the Allied guns wrought terrible damage, the Russians would spend all night repairing the city's defences, a routine that would continue throughout the siege.

Freshly reinforced, Menshikov's forces now numbered some 65,000, and Nicholas I urged him to take the battle to the Allies. The Russians had spotted a weakness in British defences on their eastern flank, which consisted of poorly manned redoubts on a series of small hills called the Causeway Heights. On 25 October, a detachment of 16,000 struck out from the town of Chorgun to capture them.

Under intense Russian bombardment, the Ottoman defenders on Redoubt 1 lasted just 90 minutes and lost a quarter of their contingent before they were forced to retreat. Overwhelmed and without reinforcements, Redoubts 2, 3 and 4 went the same way shortly after.

Lord Cardigan (centre) engages in close combat during the Charge of the Light Brigade, 25 October 1854

With his forces deployed at Sevastopol, Lord Raglan had only two cavalry brigades under Lord Lucan, plus 550 men of the 93rd Sutherland Highlanders to protect the route to Balaclava. Raglan ordered the 1st and 4th Divisions into the North Valley, a plain between the Causeway Heights and the Fedioukine Heights in the north, but it would take two hours of marching for the already exhausted troops to arrive.

A force of around 2,500 cavalry under Lieutenant General Ryzhov moved along the North Valley with the intention of crossing the Causeway Heights and advancing on Balaclava. Under orders from Lord Raglan, 900 cavalrymen of the Heavy Brigade were moving eastwards into the valley, south of Ryzhov's position. They did not see each other until the Russians crested the Causeway Heights, at which point General Sir James York Scarlett ordered his forces to charge. The first two lines were enclosed by the enemy cavalry, but this merely allowed the third line to hit them in the rear and the fourth line to hit their flank.

Of the charge of the Heavy Brigade, Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley wrote, "Then – almost as it seemed in a moment, and simultaneously – the whole Russian mass gave way and fled, at speed and in disorder, beyond the hill, vanishing behind the slope some four or five minutes after they had first swept over it."

Just before the attack, around 400 men of the Russian cavalry had detached from the main force and were en route to Balaclava, with only the 93rd Highlanders under Sir Colin Campbell in their way. Campbell ordered his men to form a line, two deep (rather than the traditional square), directly across the cavalry's path, saying, "There is no retreat from here, men. You must die where you stand." ▶

Key figures

TSAR NICHOLAS I
Calling the Ottoman Empire "the sick man of Europe", the Russian leader saw a chance to expand his own Empire. It was his demand that the Turks give Russia a protectorate over the Holy Land – and the Turks' subsequent refusal – that ultimately led to war.

NAPOLEON III
The nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte and the leader of France, Napoleon III insisted that the Turks place the Holy Land under Catholic control, which put him on a collision course with the Russians. He joined forces with Britain to wage war on Nicholas I's men.

SULTAN ABDÜLMECID I
The Turkish leader was central to the development of the crisis. Not only did his contention regarding religious rights to the Holy Land cause tension, but he also rejected the "Vienna Note", which would have enabled the situation to be resolved diplomatically.

ALEXANDER MENSHIKOV
As Russian ambassador, Menshikov was despatched to Turkey to issue Nicholas I's demands. When war erupted, he was made Commander-in-Chief of Russia's forces, but turned out to be an incompetent leader, losing the Battles of the Alma and Inkerman.

LORD ABERDEEN
Aberdeen was the British Prime Minister at the beginning of the Crimean War, but dissent over the way British involvement was handled saw his Government receive a vote of no confidence, and Aberdeen resigned from office in January 1855.

LORD RAGLAN
Raglan led British troops throughout the Crimean War, and was instrumental in defeating Menshikov's forces at the Battle of the Alma. However, he was blamed for the heavy casualties at the Siege of Sevastopol and died a broken man in June 1855.

As the cavalry approached, the infantry discharged three volleys, splitting the cavalry in two. Then the Russian commander, believing that the insubstantial line of infantry must be a ruse, with a superior force lying in wait, decided to retreat. The "thin red line", popularised by the report of William H Russell, had saved Balaclava

During the charge of the Heavy Brigade, the Earl of Cardigan's Light Brigade remained in place – supposedly under orders – and missed the chance to see off the Russian cavalry once and for all

Raglan then sent an order for the cavalry to advance and drive off the Russian troops who were dragging the British guns away from the Causeway Heights. However, the wording was ambiguous and, from the cavalry's position, the Russians could not be seen

A mixture of poor communication, arrogance and personality clashes resulted in the Light Brigade attacking the heavily defended Russian positions, about a mile away at the far end of the North Valley, flanked by artillery on either side. After a short period, to give them enough distance, Lord Lucan and his Heavy Brigade started to follow. The Light Brigade was being ripped apart, and it would have been worse if not for the intervention of Major Abdelal, who ordered his 150 cavalrymen of the French Chasseurs d'Afrique to attack the guns on the Fedioukine Heights. At this point, Lucan halted the Heavy Brigade, saying, "They have sacrificed the Light Brigade; they shall not have the Heavy, if I can help it."

Though severely depleted in numbers, the incredible bravery of the Light Infantry caused panic among the Russian forces, who scattered. But without Lucan's forces to back them up, the Light Brigade were soon overwhelmed and forced to retreat back the way they'd come, still under artillery fire and charges from Russian cavalry

Of the 673 cavalrymen who charged on the Russian guns, only 195 returned. The whole thing had taken just 20 minutes. By this time, the 1st and 4th Divisions had arrived, but such was the distress caused by this gallant but foolhardy manoeuvre that the Allies carried out no further action that day. The Russian attack on Balaclava had been rebuffed but Nicholas I's forces had gained an important foothold in control of the nearby valley.

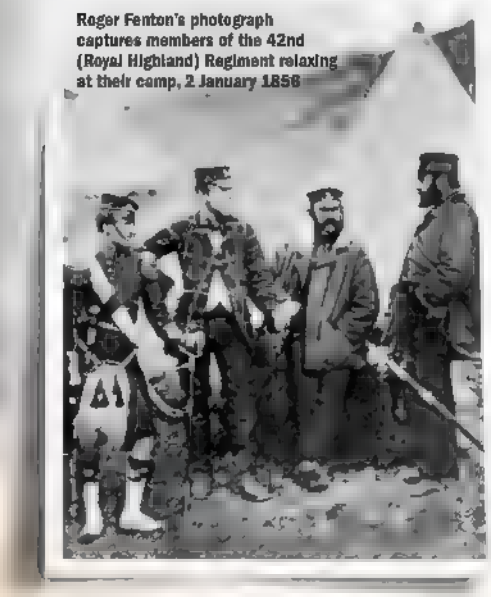
In a concerted attempt to lift the siege of Sevastopol, the Russians massed an army of 42,000 men, comprising the 10th Division under General Soimonov, in conjunction with other forces in the region under General Paulov On 5 November, the forces descended upon the British defensive positions near the town of Inkerman, directly west of the city.

The Russians approached in the morning fog, which at first concealed their presence but would add to the confusion during battle The first attack took place around a hill called Home Ridge, with around 6,300 Russian men in two columns descending on a position held by just 2,700 British troops of the 2nd Division. Despite being vastly outnumbered, the British were ordered to attack, which turned out to be a propitious move: when the hill was bombarded, the soldiers were already in the valley. Again, the modern Enfield rifles of the British proved too much for the Russian advance, which was bottlenecked by the terrain. The troops were mown down and survivors were forced back at bayonet point

General Soimonov then led a second assault with even greater numbers but, after capturing some British guns, the column was charged by two British regiments – the 77th and 88th – and attacked in the flank by the 47th. Soimonov was killed and when the column came under fire from British guns, it finally retreated.

A third attack, led by General Paulov, saw around 15,000 Russians approach in a long line, stretching east to west, and was the

Though severely depleted in numbers, the incredible bravery of the Light Infantry caused panic among the Russian forces, who scattered



Roger Fenton's photograph captures members of the 42nd (Royal Highland) Regiment relaxing at their camp, 2 January 1856

Roger Fenton took this photograph of a British camp near the Balaclava battlefield

A very public war

The involvement of *The Times* reporter William H Russell and photographer Roger Fenton had a huge impact on the war and its outcome. Russell's reports were often secondhand and potentially exaggerated, but *The Times*' coverage went uncensored and brought the realities of war home to a shocked British public (much to the annoyance of Queen Victoria).

The dreadful conditions caused a public outcry and led to Florence Nightingale and 38 nurses being sent to the hospital in Scutari, as well as the development of hospital trains and a prefabricated hospital, designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

Russell's despatches also told of the military incompetence and neglect that was destroying Britain's "finest-ever army". *The Times* set up a fund to provide home comforts for the troops, but the stores were lost or stolen and sold, leading to massive protests and petitions against the Government.

By Christmas 1854, it was starting to look like the Allies might even lose the war. So in January 1855, Sheffield MP John Arthur Roebuck tabled a vote of no confidence, with a demand for a full inquiry. The vote was carried with a huge majority and Aberdeen resigned on 31 January.

Fenton converted a disused wine wagon to use as a caravan. It was often mistaken for ammunition vehicle and targeted by enemy fire

scene of vicious hand-to-hand fighting. The British 41st Regiment marched on the line and its intense fire caused the retreat of five Russian battalions.

The rest of the battle was punctuated by valiant defensive actions by British troops, almost all of whom were outnumbered two or three to one. The frontline ebbed and flowed as territory was lost and retaken, but, with the arrival of the British 4th Division and French reinforcements, the spirited Russian attack was eventually driven back.

"This extraordinary battle closed with no final charge nor victorious advance on the one side," Sir Edward Bruce Hamley later wrote, "and no desperate stand nor tumultuous flight on the other. The Russians, when hopeless of success, seemed to melt from the lost field."

With so much fog, troops were often cut off from each other and forced to operate in isolation – hence the conflict becoming known as "The Soldier's Battle". Considering the size of the attacking army, the British and French suffered remarkably few casualties, with 740 dead and around 2,600 wounded, compared to 3,300 killed and 7,000 wounded on the Russian side. However, it did result in the Allies having to spend another winter in the Crimean.

On 15 November, a huge storm wrecked dozens of Allied ships containing £3million worth of supplies the troops needed for the colder months. Life for the men on the frontline rapidly became unbearable, with only their summer equipment to protect them from freezing conditions and flooded trenches. With no food and little shelter, the British Army was on the brink of starvation and lost huge numbers due to disease and illness.

Massive casualties

The Russians were dealt another blow in January 1855, when their relief force attacked Eupatoria only to be driven back by Ottoman artillery fire. Various other actions took place over the course of the year, but no significant gains were made on either side. An Allied assault on the city of Kerch succeeded but to little advantage, and a further attack on Balaclava saw yet another Russian defeat.

In August, the Russians planned a final offensive in an attempt to secure an Allied retreat. At the Battle of Chernaya, a force of some 58,000, made up largely of militia, launched an attack on around 27,000 French and Sardinian soldiers. Once again, though, poor communication led to the inexperienced Russian troops being sent into action in piecemeal, and they were systematically cut down, resulting in massive casualties.

By March 1855, a railway had been built from Balaclava to the siege lines, ensuring that the Allies had a continual supply of materials and ammunition. The siege of Sevastopol would continue through 1855 until 5 September, when the Allies' sixth and largest bombardment began (in which 307 cannons fired 150,000 rounds). Three days later, 60,000 Allied troops attacked and captured the southern side of the city. Then, on the 9th, the Russians began evacuating.

By the end of hostilities, the British had lost around 21,000 men, the French 10,200 and the Turkish more than 100,000, while nearly a quarter of a million Russians had died (some sources state a much higher figure). And of all the deaths, over a third were caused by disease, most notably cholera.

The war in the Crimea ended on 30 March 1856, with the signing of the Treaty of Paris. In the end, neither side really won; the Allies earned no lasting gains and, despite only minimal involvement in the war, the biggest loser was Austria. Having renounced its alliance with Russia, it became diplomatically isolated and was then defeated in the Austro-Prussian war of 1866. New national borders were drawn and sweeping changes were initiated across Russia, which embarked on a programme of reforms and industrialisation. Its defeat in the Crimea also facilitated the unification of Germany and of Italy, and, with the balance of power drastically altered, so began the inexorable path towards the First World War.

Edouard Louis Dubufe's *Congress Of Paris 1856* (1856) depicts the signing of the Treaty of Paris, which signalled an end to hostilities in the Crimea

Military MILESTONES

WARSHIPS

Ruling the waves is often a crucial part of winning a war, which is why navies have traditionally been obsessed with producing the **biggest, fastest and deadliest vessels**. Chris Short looks at some of history's best...

1514 HENRY GRACE A DIEU

One of the first true military boats, the Henry Grace à Dieu (Henry Grace of God) – or "Great Harry" – weighed in at 1,000 tons and required a crew of 1,420 men. Known as a floating castle due to its high decks and walls, it was renovated by King Henry VIII, who ordered portholes to be cut along the sides of the ship for cannons, so that it could be kept at a safe distance from the enemy whilst pelting them with balls of iron. Fitted with 69 guns, the high decks also served as a platform for archers and light gunners, making "Great Harry" the most heavily armed ship in the world at the time.

1850 NAPOLEON I

Conceived by Henri Dupuy de Lôme (who later designed the first ocean-going ironclad battleship, La Gloire), the Napoleon I was the world's first purpose-built steam battleship – the first in a class of nine manufactured for the French Navy over a ten-year period. Weighing 5,120 tons and 239 feet long, it could reach a top speed of 13 knots (8mph). Fitted with two gun decks containing 90 guns, the Napoleon's large coal supply enabled it to spend three months at sea without refuelling – making it a highly capable addition to the French Crimean War fleet.

1500 1525 1550 1575 1600 1650 1700 1725 1750 1775 1800 1825 1850

1587 ARK ROYAL

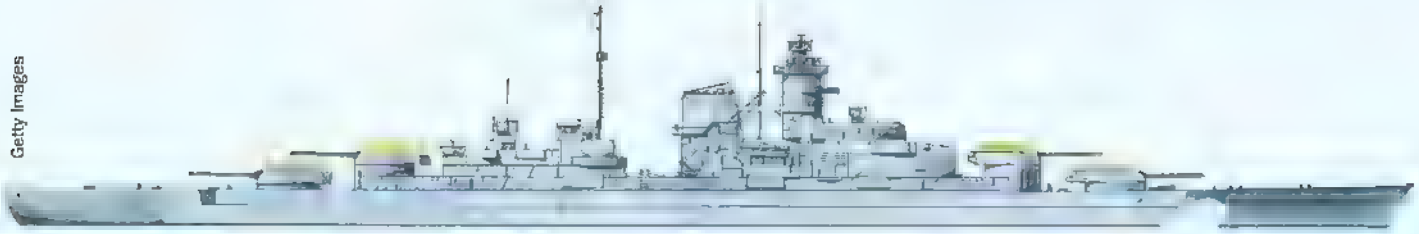
The Ark Royal was an English galleon, originally ordered for Sir Walter Raleigh (when it was named the Ark Raleigh) and later purchased by Queen Elizabeth I for £5,000, for service in the Royal Navy. During a career spanning five decades, it was used as the flagship in a number of engagements, including the battles that led to the defeat of the Spanish Armada. The ship contained 55 guns and was manned by a crew of 400, with around six men to each gun. The Ark Royal (or, as it became, the Anne Royal, in honour of James I's consort, Anne of Denmark) remained in service until 1636, when it was sunk after being hit by its own anchor.

1774 USS ALFRED

With the situation between England and its US colonies deteriorating rapidly before the outbreak of the American Revolution, Benjamin Franklin – then American Ambassador of the Continental Congress to France – authorised a fleet to capture English ships. One of the seized vessels was the HMS Black Prince, named after Edward III's son. Renamed the Alfred, the boat was outfitted for war – equipped with 30 cannons – and made the flagship of the fledgling US Navy. Having captured several English vessels, the Alfred's crew was itself forced to surrender in 1778 after being outnumbered by opposing warships. It was returned to the Royal Navy and remained in service until 1782.

1897 HMS CANOPUS

Named after the ancient Egyptian city where the Battle of the Nile took place in 1798, the steam-powered HMS Canopus was the lead ship in a class of six Canopus vessels. These were the first British battleships to use water-tube boilers, which generated more power at less expense in weight than the cylindrical boilers used in previous ships. In August 1914, the Canopus was involved in the search for Graf Spee's German East Asia Squadron. It fired the first shots in the Battle of the Falklands that December, before taking part in the Dardanelles Campaign in 1915. Weighing 12,950 tons, the ship reached a top speed of 18 knots (20mph), and was equipped with 35-caliber Mk VIII guns and underwater torpedo tubes. It was retired in 1920.



Getty Images

1920 HMS HOOD

Commissioned just after the First World War, Hood was, for more than two decades, the world's largest warship. It spent its early years cruising the globe, beore serving with the Mediterranean fleet from 1936-1939, protecting British interests during the Spanish Civil War. However, despite its size (860 feet long; 42,100 tons) and top speed of 31 knots (36mph), by the time the Second World War began, the vessel was ill-equipped to deal with the German Navy's latest weaponry. During the Battle of the Denmark Strait in May 1941, Hood was sunk by the KMS Bismarck (see right), a tragedy that had a profound effect on the British. The ship's wreckage was found in July 2001.

1940 KMS BISMARCK

At the time of its commissioning in 1940, the German *Kriegsmarine*'s Bismarck was the largest battleship the world had ever seen, weighing in at an incredible 50,000 tons. It took a crew of 2,200 men to drive the vessel and control its vast array of weapons, which included cannons and 15-inch guns in heavily armoured turrets. Its size and impermeable armour posed a serious threat to the Royal Navy, which hunted down the German boat and locked horns with it at the Battle of the Denmark Strait. Suffering damage to its fuel tanks, the Bismarck fled towards occupied France but was sunk on the way by the HMS Dorsetshire.

2013 HMS DEFENDER (D36)

Commissioned last year, the 8,000-ton Defender is the fifth of the Royal Navy's six state-of-the-art Type-45 destroyers. Designed "to shield the fleet from air attack", it's capable of defending against fighter planes, drones and supersonic anti-ship missiles. This is thanks to the ship's Sea Viper air-defence system, which gives it the ability to control several missiles in the air at once. As well as its 48 missiles – which have ranges up to 120km – the Defender is equipped with harpoon launchers, machine guns and mini-guns. And with a top speed of 29 knots (33mph), it's no slouch either. A new force on the seas!

1927 IJN AKAGI

Named after a Japanese mountain, the Akagi was commissioned in 1927 and served as a seagoing airbase for Japanese aircraft throughout the first half of the Second World War. Weighing a mighty 36,500 tons and boasting a top speed of 31.5 knots (36mph), it served the Empire during its assault on Pearl Harbor in 1941, then continued its campaign with the invasion of Java. However, the vessel eventually came unstuck at the Battle of Midway, where it was sunk – a loss that contributed significantly to the Allies' ultimate victory in the Pacific.

1977 USS OLIVER HAZARD PERRY (FFG-7)

Named after the renowned 19th-century US naval commander and hero of the 1813 Battle of Lake Erie, the Perry was the lead ship in the Oliver Hazard Perry class of guided-missile frigates, designed and constructed in the latter stages of the Cold War. Primarily used as an anti-aircraft and anti-submarine warship, the vessel was equipped with torpedoes and Mk-32 triple-tube launchers. It weighed in at a relatively light 4,100 tons but was nevertheless incredibly durable, and was capable of reaching top speeds of 29 knots (33mph). While the Perry was scrapped in 2005 after 28 years in service, other models in that class of ships are still active on the seas.

Great Battles

BERLIN

Second World War: The Soviet offensive that encircled and captured the German capital during April/May 1945 represented the culmination of the brutal war waged on the Eastern Front. The Soviet success, which led to Adolf Hitler's suicide, hastened Germany's unconditional surrender

THE BATTLE OF BERLIN IN SPRING 1945 represented the climax of the war on the Eastern Front. During January and February, the Red Army had advanced through Poland and closed up to the Rivers Oder and Neisse. With key Soviet bridgeheads established over the Oder just 75km (47 miles) from Berlin, a renewed Soviet push to the capital was inevitable.

During March and the first half of April, the Soviets poured resources into the Oder front to strengthen the forces deployed by Marshal Georgy Zhukov's First Belorussian Front, Marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky's Second Belorussian Front and Marshal Ivan Konev's First Ukrainian Front. Between them, these three commands fielded 2.4 million troops, 6,250 tanks and 41,000 artillery pieces. The German Army Group Vistula and the northern flank of Army Group Centre opposed these Soviet forces, deploying between them 765,000 troops, 1,500 armoured fighting vehicles (AFVs) and 9,300 artillery pieces.

The German Army Group Vistula frontline stretched south along the Oder's western bank from near Stettin down to Küstrin, where a Soviet bridgehead west of the river had been established. The front then jutted east of the river around Frankfurt before cutting back west on another Soviet bridgehead. From there, it continued south along the western banks of the Oder and Neisse, down into the Army Group Centre sector. The Soviet plan was to execute a double envelopment of Berlin. By delineating only the initial boundary between Zhukov's and Konev's fronts, Stalin created intense rivalry between the men for the honour of being the first to seize the Reichstag – the German Parliament building.

STALIN CREATED RIVALRY BETWEEN THE TWO MEN FOR THE HONOUR OF SEIZING THE REICHSTAG

On 16 April, the Soviet offensive began after devastatingly powerful artillery bombardments. ▶

The facts

WHO The Soviet First and Second Belorussian, and First Ukrainian Fronts; the German Army Groups Vistula and Centre

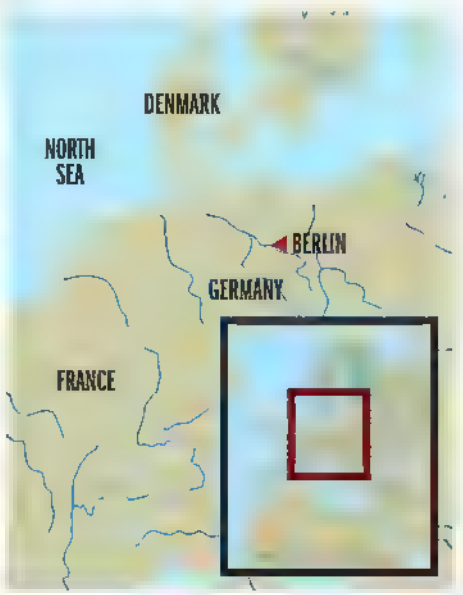
WHAT The Soviet First Belorussian and First Ukrainian Fronts, attacking from the Oder Front, carried out an encirclement of Berlin, which led to its capture, while the Second Belorussian Front carried out a flank protection offensive further north.

WHERE Berlin, Germany.

WHEN 16 April–2 May 1945.

WHY Soviet forces had to engage and destroy the powerful German ranks deployed along the Oder, whose mission was to protect Berlin. Then the Red Army could drive west to link up with the Western Allies along the River Elbe, thus completing the defeat of Germany.

OUTCOME The Red Army encircled Berlin and, after capturing much of the city, forced the remnants of the German defensive garrison to surrender. In the midst of this triumph, the Nazi Führer, Adolf Hitler, committed suicide on the afternoon of 30 April.



A column of IS-2 heavy tanks on the outskirts of Berlin, March 1945. This Soviet machine, introduced in 1944 and sporting a potent 122mm (4.8in) gun, served in independent regiments that spearheaded the drive on Berlin

OPPOSING FORCES

SOVIET UNION
Second Belorussian Front
(Marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky)
1 x tank army and 5 x armies
Total = 570,000 troops

First Belorussian Front
(Marshal Georgi K Zhukov)
2 x tank armies and 9 x armies
Total = 980,000 troops

First Ukrainian Front
(Marshal Ivan Konev)
2 x tank armies and 7 x armies
Total = 850,000 troops

GERMAN FORCES
Army Group Vistula (Col Gen Gotthard Heinrici):
Third Panzer Army
(Pz Gen Hasso von Manteuffel);
Ninth Army (Gen Theodor Busse);
Army Detachment Steiner
(SS Lt Gen Felix Steiner);
21st Army
(Gen Tippelskirch from 27 April);
Total = 395,000 troops
Army Group Centre
(Field Marshal Ferdinand Schörner);
Fourth Panzer Army
(Pz Gen Fritz-Herbert Gräser);
12th Army
(Pz Gen Walter Wenck);
Total = 370,000 troops

During 16 and 17 April, three of Zhukov's armies smashed their way through the initial German positions west of Küstrin and, over the next 48 hours, these spearheads gradually fought their way onto the Seelöwe Heights in the face of fanatical German resistance. To overcome this, Zhukov had to commit his key mobile reserves, the First and Second Guards Tank Armies. Further south that day, six of Konev's armies smashed through the initial German defensive line established along the Neisse's western bank between Forst and Gorlitz. During 17 and 18 April, Konev's forces surged west towards the River Spree in the beginnings of a huge left wheel designed to envelop Berlin from the south.

AFTER A FIT OF RAGE AT WHAT SEEMED LIKE TREASONOUS FAILURE, HITLER SUFFERED A MENTAL COLLAPSE

As if these twin offensives weren't enough for the Germans to deal with, the neighbouring Second Belorussian Front launched a subsidiary attack on the Oder line south of Stettin on 18 April. Its aim was to drive Army Group Vistula's northern flank – manned by the Third Panzer Army – back towards the River Havel, thus protecting the flank of the planned Soviet northern envelopment of Berlin.

From 19 to 22 April, the Soviet offensives to the north-east and south-east of Berlin continued to advance westwards, permitting the planned encirclement to take form. Zhukov's forces burst through the Seelöwe Heights, enabling the 47th Army to thrust south-west to the north of Berlin. Its objective was to reach the eastward course of the River Spree in the Brandenburg-Ketzin area, west of the capital, where the link-up with Konev's north-westerly advance would take place. Meanwhile, Zhukov's two northern armies advanced north-west to secure an east-west defensive position along the Hohenzollern and Ruppiner Canals to protect the northern Soviet pincer from any German counter-attacks. Simultaneously, four Soviet armies continued to drive the Ninth Army back west from the Seelöwe Heights towards the eastern fringes of Berlin.

Further south, meanwhile, Konev's spearhead armies surged north-west before turning north to approach the Brandenburg-Berlin area from the south; only a 32km (20 mile) gap now separated these forces from the spearheads of Zhukov's 47th Army, then located north-west of Berlin. In so doing, Konev's forces outflanked much of General Theodor Busse's Ninth Army, then still determinedly defending the Beeskow-Lübben area, south-east of the city. Konev's 28th Army, deployed on the inner flank of this envelopment,

Soviet field-artillery pieces provided the massive firepower required to soften up the sometimes-fanatical German resistance

now wheeled back north-east to link up on 23 April with Zhukov's 69th Army in the area south-east of Berlin. This link-up surrounded much of the Ninth Army, plus elements of the Fourth Panzer Army, in a pocket south-east of the capital. Critically, on 25 April, Konev's spearheads pushed north to link up near Ketzin with Zhukov's 47th Army. The Soviets had encircled Berlin.

During this period, Konev's other spearheads had continued to drive west and north-west. By 25 April, they had reached a line that ran from Ketzin in the east of Berlin, south-west via Brandenburg, and thence south via Belzig to Wittenberg on the River Elbe. Konev's front then ran south-east along the Elbe's eastern bank, passing close to Torgau and on to Meissen. Konev's southern flank held a line that ran from west to east, opposing the remainder of the Fourth Panzer Army, a part of Field Marshal Ferdinand Schörner's Army Group Centre. That same day, the western Allies notched up a key milestone. Over the previous fortnight, the US First Army had advanced rapidly east to reach the Rivers Elbe and Mulde between Magdeburg and Halle, where they had halted. The Allies now decided to focus on the northern and southern axis of advance, rather than the direct central push onto Berlin.

On 25 April, however, a US patrol pushed further east beyond the Mulde to link up near Torgau with Red Army spearheads that had pushed west beyond the Elbe. Between them, the Allies had split the Reich in two, further hastening the end of the Nazis.

Hitler's vow

As the Soviet encirclement of Berlin took shape, Adolf Hitler and his commanders focused almost exclusively on preventing a siege, to the exclusion of everything else going on in the wider war. Their hopes now lay in a series of proposed German counter-attacks.

On 22 April, Hitler had ordered the newly formed Army Detachment Steiner to counter attack south-west towards Berlin from the Eberswalde area, thus shattering the northern Soviet pincer. But Felix Steiner felt that the forces at his disposal were not sufficient to carry out such an attack, and refused. After a fit of rage at what he saw as treasonous failure on the part of his commander, Hitler suffered a virtual mental collapse after announcing that the war was lost, he declared his intention both to remain in Berlin until the bitter end and to take his own life should it become necessary, to avoid him falling into enemy hands.

Huge expectations

However, that evening, the *Führer* recovered his composure and now pinned all his hopes on four separate relief efforts that had, by then, been ordered to begin. First, the remainder of Steiner's forces – now under the command of Rudolf Holste – together with elements from the Third Panzer Army were to attack south and south-west towards Berlin. Second, General Walther Wenck's newly raised divisions were to disengage themselves from the Elbe front around Magdeburg, where they faced the Americans, and counter-attack towards Berlin from the south-west to link up with the Ninth Army. Third, the Ninth Army was to smash its way west out of its encirclement around Halbe to link up with Wenck's forces; both commands were then to drive north to relieve Berlin. Finally, the Fourth Panzer Army was to thrust north into the southern flank of Konev's advance in the Bautzen area, thus drawing Soviet ▶

TANK CREW, SECOND GUARDS TANK ARMY

This Soviet tank crewman, from one of the elite Guards tank armies that spearheaded the final assault on Berlin, wears the standard Russian tanker's one-piece khaki combat overalls, secured about the waist by a brown leather belt. On his head, he sports the famous Soviet tanker's fabric-and-leather headgear, which contains rubber headphone cups built into the protective side flaps. Finally, he wears knee-high black leather jackboots; some of his peers were still issued with the earlier-pattern black ankle boots.

1 Evening of 28 April: The Soviet Third Shock Army continues to drive forwards south-east, towards the River Spree and the key German government district beyond
LEHRTER STATION
2 29 April, 3am: Soviet forces seize the sole remaining crossing of the River Spree, the Moltke Bridge, despite German attempts to destroy the structure
RIVER SPREE
TIERGARTEN
3 2 May, 8am. After mounting a largely unsuccessful break out attempt the previous night, the surviving remnants of the Berlin garrison surrender to the Soviets

Great Battles

BERLIN
28 APRIL–2 MAY 1945

4 30 April, 10.50pm: After a battle that rages for much of the day, Soviet forces secure most of the Reichstag and, in a hugely important symbolic moment, fly their flag from its roof. Several isolated pockets of German resistance continue to hold out until 1 May
REICHSTAG
UNTER DEN LINDEN
BRANDENBURG GATE
3 30 April, 3.30pm: With advancing Soviet forces just a few hundred yards away, Adolf Hitler commits suicide in his underground bunker
HITLER'S BUNKER

▶ MACHINE OF DEATH The ISU-152 was a heavy assault gun introduced during late 1943. It mounted a 152mm (6in) gun in a heavily armoured superstructure, built on the chassis of the IS-2 heavy tank. The vehicle was used primarily as an infantry-support weapon, with its main armament proving effective against enemy fortifications as well as troops in trenches

forces away from the capital. Hitler placed huge expectations on the prospect that these relief missions would break the Soviet siege around Berlin. In reality, these forces were already fighting for their own survival in a rapidly deteriorating strategic situation, and stood little chance of realising their leader's ambitions.

On 25 April, when the Soviets completed their encirclement of Berlin, the defending German garrison, led by General Helmuth Weidling, deployed around 85,000 troops. These forces held a pocket that stretched 6.5km (four miles) from the north to the south, and 9.5km (six miles) from the west to the east. The defenders comprised one SS and four Wehrmacht divisions, together with improvised battle groups formed from Hitler Youth, Home Guard and flak detachments. Some 390,000 Soviets, organised into seven armies, now encircled the city.

In the early morning of 26 April, the final Soviet onslaught, deep into the ruins of Berlin, began. While artillery, mortars and aircraft unrelentingly poured supporting fire into the crumbling buildings, Soviet assault units fought their way forwards building by building, in the face of fanatical German resistance.

Looting and raping

Conditions inside the German enclave rapidly deteriorated into a humanitarian disaster: thousands of wounded soldiers crammed into cellars and bunkers, waiting hours for attention from hopelessly overwhelmed and under resourced medical staff; corpses lay festering where they'd fallen; SS teams prowled the ruins, executing any alleged shirker they encountered; starving, dehydrated civilians were compelled to brave the horrors above ground in search of food and water; and finally, as the Soviets gradually took control of the city, drunken second-echelon Red Army troops ran amok, looting and raping in an orgy of violence.

From 26-28 April, along the south-eastern sector of the German perimeter, three Soviet armies fought their way north-west past Tempelhof Airport towards the Reich Chancellery and Hitler's underground bunker. Further west, two more armies fought their way north, pushing back the defenders along the southern German sector to the Kurfürstendamm. Meanwhile, along the northern sector, the Soviet Second Guards and Third Shock Armies gradually drove the Germans back south over the River Spree towards the Zoo Flak Tower and the Reichstag. Critically, during the early hours of 29 April, Soviet spearheads captured intact the Moltke Bridge over the Spree, just 700m (800yd) from the Reich Chancellery. The German commanders, moreover, now assessed that their available ammunition would expire within 24 hours. These twin hammer-blows convinced Hitler that defeat was inevitable; he subsequently married his long-time mistress,

With Berlin under siege, even German children were shown how to use a Panzerfaust to defend the city

Soviet soldiers celebrate their hard-won victory near the Reichstag. Capturing the German Parliament building was a key Soviet objective – once secured, its propaganda units took photographic evidence of the triumph

Eva Braun, in a small civil ceremony at midnight, then dictated his political testament.

Throughout 30 April, the savage battle for the centre of Berlin continued, with the remaining 10,000 defending troops being pressed back into an ever shrinking enclave. Soviet troops fought to secure the ruined Reichstag throughout the day, with the building eventually falling that evening - although some German soldiers held out in various rooms for the next 48 hours. That evening, Red Army troops flew the Soviet flag from the building in an act of immense symbolic significance.

An even more significant event transpired at around 3.30pm. With Soviet troops just 360m (400yd) away, Hitler committed suicide. That evening, with the defenders running short of ammunition, the Germans opened surrender negotiations with the Soviets. While these talks dragged on, the savage struggle for Berlin continued. Finally, in the early hours of 2 May, General Weidling announced his acceptance of the Soviet demand for unconditional surrender. By then, anyway, the roughly 7,000 surviving defenders had launched one last, desperate effort to smash their way out of the city, with only a few dozen soldiers reaching Wenck's frontline. At 6am, the remnants of the Berlin garrison surrendered. The capital of the German Reich had fallen.

As the final twists in the saga of Berlin's defence had unfolded, so the battle beyond the city had continued to rage. On 28 and 29 April, Wenck's advance north-east towards Berlin had made sufficient progress to raise the hopes of those trapped in the Führerbunker. In the early hours of 30 April, however, news had reached

HITLER HAD BEGUN PREPARING TO TAKE HIS OWN LIFE RATHER THAN FACE SOVIET CAPTIVITY

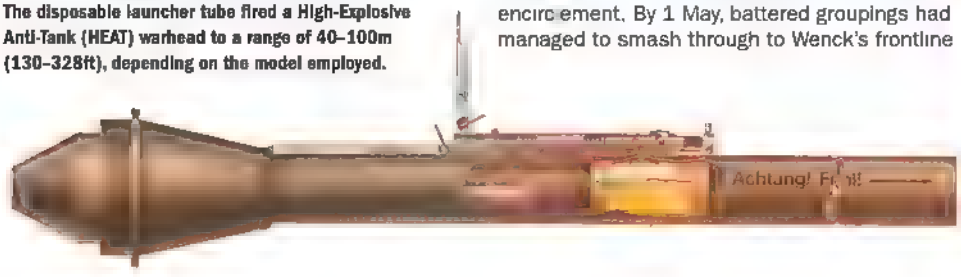
Hitler that not only had these relief efforts stalled, but that they were also facing powerful enemy counter attacks, which had begun to drive them back west. This report had proved devastating, crushing the last hopes in the bunker that rescue was feasible. And within hours, Hitler had begun preparing to take his own life rather than face Soviet captivity.

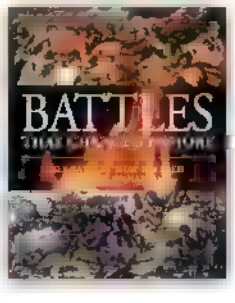
Meanwhile, to the south of Berlin during 24-30 April, the remnants of the Ninth Army had attempted to punch west through the Soviet encirclement. By 1 May, battered groupings had managed to smash through to Wenck's frontline in the Belzig area. By 4 May, the Soviet advance had penned the survivors of the 12th and Ninth armies into an area east of the Elbe around Burg. On 6 and 7 May, these men surrendered to Americans holding the western bank of the Elbe.

During this period further south, Soviet attacks pushed the northern flank of Army Group Centre back on Dresden. In the north of the Oder front, moreover, the Second Belorussian Front continued its offensive against the battered remnants of Army Group Vistula, the Third Panzer Army and the newly mobilised 21st Army, which had been formed from cadres that had escaped by sea from East Prussia. By 1 May, the surviving remnants of the Third Panzer Army had collapsed into a disorganised flight westwards as the advancing Soviet forces pushed west to meet up with the eastward advance of the British 21st Army Group. During the evening of 2 May, British and Soviet forces linked up at Wismar on the Baltic Coast, and over the ensuing days the remnants of the Third Panzer Army surrendered to the British forces.

The Soviet encirclement and capture of Berlin, and the suicide of Adolf Hitler, precipitated the end of an already-crumbling Third Reich; at midnight on 8 May, the German armed forces surrendered unconditionally to the Allies.

▼THE LAST DEFENCE The Panzerfaust was the German infantryman's principal anti-tank weapon. The disposable launcher tube fired a High-Explosive Anti-Tank (HEAT) warhead to a range of 40–100m (130–328ft), depending on the model employed.





This feature is an edited extract from the book *Battles That Changed History*, published by Amber Books, RRP £24.99. It is available from www.amberbooks.co.uk

Children play on a Serbian tank that's been destroyed by NATO bombing, Klina, Kosovo, July 1999

THE FALL OF YUGOSLAVIA

Yugoslav Wars: Political and ethnic differences have blighted the Balkans since time incarnate, but tensions reached boiling point during the 1990s with the outbreak of all-out war. As Steve Jarratt explains, ethnic cleansing was rife and the geography of the area was changed forever…

Mike Nelson/AFP/Getty Images

For the bulk of the 1990s, the people of Yugoslavia suffered a bitter war, driven by internal rivalries of ethnicity, political affiliations and religious beliefs. By the end of the conflict, hundreds of thousands were dead, and millions of refugees had been forced to relocate to other parts of Europe, creating tensions elsewhere. Trials for war crimes committed during this period are only expected to conclude this year.

The underlying causes of the troubles lay in deep-seated rivalries that extend back hundreds of years, but it was the events of the Second World War that would seal the country's fate.

When Hitler's forces invaded Yugoslavia in 1941 – assisted by Italian, Hungarian and Bulgarian troops – they were supported by a Croatian fascist group called the Ustaše. In return, its commander, Ante Pavelic, was given leadership of the Independent State of Croatia, a puppet state incorporating Bosnia-Herzegovina. The other minor republics were then divided up among Italy, Hungary and Germany. Macedonia was awarded to Bulgaria, while Serbia fell under German control.

With the entire region destabilised, ethnic differences rapidly came to the fore and a series of bloody civil wars ensued. The Ustaše believed in the advancement of a racially pure Croatia, and began the systematic execution of all non-Croats and anyone who would not convert to Catholicism. Around half a million Serbs, Jews and Romanies were murdered, often in concentration camps.

Operating across Yugoslavia were two major resistance movements: the royalists or Chetniks, led by Serb Colonel Draža Mihailovic, representing the Yugoslav government in exile; and the communist Partisans under the control of Marshal Josip Broz Tito. For a while, both groups worked in parallel to resist the German occupation, but they were soon fighting each other, partly to gain control of the region but largely due to their differing ideologies.

Tito's Partisans wanted to create a federal, multi-ethnic communist state in Yugoslavia, with the slogan "Brotherhood and Unity". However, several Chetnik groups collaborated with the Axis forces in order to progress their own goals of creating an ethnically cleansed "Greater Serbia". Their members conducted terrorist operations against Croatians in response to the actions of the Ustaše, against the Partisans on political grounds, and against Muslims due to the long-term acrimony arising from four centuries of Ottoman Turkish rule.

WITH THE ENTIRE REGION DESTABILISED, ETHNIC DIFFERENCES RAPIDLY CAME TO THE FORE AND A SERIES OF BLOODY CIVIL WARS ENSUED

Despite ongoing clashes with the Chetniks, Tito's Partisans were effective against the Axis ▶

German vehicles and troops in Yugoslavia, April 1941

Getty Images

HISTORY OF YUGOSLAVIA

The nation of Yugoslavia first came into being in the aftermath of the First World War, following the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. The State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs was reunited with the Kingdom of Serbia to form the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, which was given the nickname Yugoslavia (taken from the words *Jug*, meaning South, and *Slaveni*, meaning Slavs).

The area forms part of the Balkan peninsula, which takes its name from the Turkish word *balkan*, meaning a chain of wooded mountains. This refers to the range of peaks that stretch down from the east of Bulgaria to the east of Serbia. The region was conquered by the Ottoman Turks in the 14th Century and remained under Islamic rule for some 500 years.

The notion of a single state for the South Slavic people first came into being in the late 17th Century, and was resurrected by Croatian intelligentsia in the early 19th Century. As the Austro-Hungarian empire grew, so the Ottoman one declined and its grip on the region loosened. Following the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, Serbia, Montenegro and Romania became independent, and the principality of Bulgaria was created. Slavonia and Croatia stayed under the rule of Austria-Hungary, which also took control of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The crumbling Ottoman Empire was expelled from the region when war broke out in 1912. An alliance of Montenegrin, Serbian, Bulgarian and Greek troops drove the Turks out of Kosovo, Macedonia and Albania, which declared independence. The Serbs turned against the Bulgarians and occupied all of Kosovo as well as Macedonia. After a Serbian politician shot and killed three of his Croatian counterparts, King Alexander I took control of the country, officially naming it Yugoslavia in 1929. He abolished the nation's historic regions, creating nine provinces or *banovinas*. These remained in place until the outbreak of World War II.

United Nations armoured vehicles patrol the destroyed city of Mostar, May 1993

occupiers. Historian Basil Davidson refers to their actions thus: "By the middle of 1943, Partisan resistance to the Germans and their allies had grown from the dimensions of a mere nuisance to those of a major factor in the general situation. In many parts of occupied Europe, the enemy was suffering losses at the hands of Partisans that he could ill afford. And nowhere were these heavier than in Yugoslavia."

When the extent of Chetnik collaboration became clear, the Allies switched their support from Mihailovic to Tito, although the Yugoslav Partisans wouldn't receive substantial aid until the summer of 1944. Aided by Russian forces, Tito's army, now numbering some 800,000, broke through the enemy lines and drove the Germans out of Yugoslavia. Tito was recognised as the country's Prime Minister, and the provisional government of the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia was set up in Belgrade in 1945.

Immediately after the cessation of hostilities, Tito's pro-republican People's Front swept to victory in national elections – in part due to a boycott by the monarchists, but also because of the leader's huge popularity as the perceived liberator of Yugoslavia. The current King, Peter II, was deposed, whereupon the country was renamed the Socialist Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, comprising six equal republics: Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Serbia, the last of which was made up of the provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina.

In the years following the war, a re-unified Yugoslavia enjoyed economic growth and prosperity, its communist rule restoring much-needed stability. Any stirrings of nationalism were swiftly quashed and the Chetnik leader Mihailovic was executed.

THERE WERE MANY FACTORS THAT WOULD INEXORABLY LEAD TO CIVIL WAR: RISING FOREIGN DEBT, POLITICAL OPPORTUNISM AND THE FALL OF COMMUNISM

In 1948, Tito and Joseph Stalin fell out over Yugoslavia's refusal to adhere to Moscow's economic polices, and the situation escalated to the point where Hungarian and Soviet forces began massing on Yugoslavia's northern borders. Eventually, the country was expelled from the Cominform (the official forum of the international communist movement), and Stalin assumed that, without Soviet approval, Tito's power would evaporate. When that failed to transpire, he tried unsuccessfully to have the leader assassinated. Tito brazenly responded with a letter saying, "Stop sending people to kill me. We've already captured five of them – one of them with a bomb and another with a rifle. If you don't stop sending killers, I'll send one to Moscow, and I won't have to send a second."

For the next 20 years, the country remained relatively stable – although, as with many communist countries, this came at the cost of personal freedoms. However, the 1950s and 1960s were notable for a series of economic reforms and for political liberalisation. The early 1960s proved to be a boom time for the nation, with low unemployment and a populace that enjoyed much greater freedoms than other Eastern Bloc countries.

However, the 1970s saw an upswell in nationalist sensibilities, and the *masovni pokret*, or "mass movement", saw Croatians call for a decentralisation of the economy. The campaign, known as the Croatian Spring, resulted in a series of demonstrations and, in 1974, led to a new federal constitution giving more autonomy to the six republics and two provinces.

While this action placated the Croatians and Albanians, it only served to annoy the Serbs, who distrusted their neighbours' motives. The Serbs were also frustrated by Tito's recognition of Montenegro and Macedonia as independent

1991 TIMELINE: THE WAR IN YUGOSLAVIA

JUNE

Croatia and Slovenia declare independence from Yugoslavia. Troops of the federal army, the JNA, are deployed in Slovenia, but an agreement is swiftly reached, ending the conflict.

JULY

Fighting breaks out in Croatia between the JNA and Croatia's newly formed National Guard.

AUGUST

The Battle of Vukovar – between the JNA and Croatian defenders – begins. The skirmish will last for 87 days, costing the lives of some 3,600 JNA soldiers, 1,650 Croatians and more than 1,110 civilians.

NOVEMBER

Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina form the Croatian Community (or Republic) of Herzeg-Bosnia. It will exist for just three years, after which it's joined to the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

DECEMBER

Serbs in Krajina and Western Slavonia declare themselves the Republic of Serbian Krajina (RSK).

1992 JANUARY

Croatia is recognised by the European Community. A ceasefire is agreed and the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) is deployed to maintain the peace. The JNA withdraws, but RSK forces retain a foothold on Croatia's western borders.

A mother and her daughter shelter behind a United Nations armoured vehicle during a firefight, Sarajevo, 1995

Getty Images

nations, and of the increasing power afforded the two Serb provinces, which they saw as the "division of Serbia"

Tito died on 4 May 1980, just short of his 88th birthday. His standing on the global stage was such that his state funeral was the largest on record, attended by four Kings, six Princes, 31 Presidents and 22 Prime Ministers. Yugoslavia's guiding hand was gone, but there were many factors – both internal and external – that would inexorably lead to civil war: rising foreign debt, political opportunism and the fall of communism, which in turn reduced Yugoslavia's importance as a player in the Cold War.

Guerrilla tactics

In 1987, Slobodan Milošević became the head of the Serbian Communist Party, promoting the ideal of a "Greater Serbia", which, he envisaged, would encompass Serb-populated areas of Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and all of Vojvodina and Kosovo, both of which had a high Albanian contingent. In 1989, Serbia rescinded Kosovo's autonomy and sent in troops to suppress the resulting protests

Milošević expanded his influence over the country, using propaganda and nationalistic rhetoric to become something of a cult figure By 1989, he controlled most of eastern Yugoslavia and had agents attempting to destabilise the government in Bosnia Herzegovina in order to install his own followers.

Tensions continued to mount between Croatia and its ethnic Serb population. When the Croatian government sent in special forces by helicopter to quell a Serb rebellion, the federal Yugoslav air force intervened, forcing them to turn back. With a large Serb contingent, the notionally neutral Yugoslav forces – including the JNA (the Jugoslavenska Narodna Armija, or Yugoslav People's Army) – were increasingly on the side of Milošević.

On 25 June 1991, Slovenia and Croatia declared independence, at which point units of the JNA's 13th Corps were sent in to secure Slovenia's border with Italy. The force, consisting of some 2,000 men in an armoured column, was swiftly halted by Slovenian roadblocks.

Over the next ten days, further action involved the JNA taking Brnik Airport, and a number of skirmishes in which Slovenian guerrilla tactics captured JNA tanks. The heaviest fighting took place on 2 July, when a JNA convoy was ambushed and captured in Krakovski Forest, and its Fourth Armoured Brigade was forced to retreat near the town of Bregana

Under pressure from the European Community, and due in part to the largely ineffectual efforts of the conscripted JNA troops, a ceasefire was agreed and the war formally ended on 7 July with the signing of the Brioni Declaration, recognising Slovenian and Croatian independence. The short conflict had resulted in the loss of just 44 JNA soldiers and 19 Slovenians. In September, the Republic of Macedonia also declared independence, but its government maintained good relations with Belgrade, and the move met with little resistance.

However, the simmering hatred between Serbs and their Croatian neighbours began to boil over, driven by racist propaganda and displays of nationalistic hubris. Isolated beatings turned into killings, and the cycle of violence and retribution rapidly escalated out of control. The Serbian minority opposed Croatia's secession and sought to carve out its own Serb state Assisted by the JNA and paramilitary groups, Serbian militia attempted to conquer as much ▶

1993

JUNE
Fighting breaks out in Gornji Vakuf, marking the start of the war between the Bosniaks of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Croatian Community of Herzeg-Bosnia.

APRIL
Bosnia-Herzegovina declares independence. Bosnian Serbs begin the siege of Sarajevo, which will last nearly four years and cost more than 14,000 lives.

AUGUST
The Republic of the Serb People of Bosnia and Herzegovina is renamed Republika Srpska.

JANUARY
The Croatian Army launches Operation Maslenica to retake territory from the RSK in Dalmatia. The Peruca hydroelectric dam is saved from destruction by Royal Marine Colonel Mark Gray.

APRIL
The Ahmici massacre is the culmination of the Lašva Valley ethnic-cleansing program, perpetrated by members of the HVO and Croatian Army. In all, some 2,000 Bosniaks are murdered, including women and children.

SEPTEMBER
Operation Medak Pocket sees Croatian forces attack a Serb salient in the Lika region of Croatia. A skirmish follows between Croat forces and Canadian and French UN troops.

THE COMBATANTS

THE CROATIAN ARMY (HRVATSKA VOJSKA, OR HV)

Formed in 1991 with the renaming of the Croatian National Guard, the HV comprised around 8,000 troops and some 40,000 reservists during the war.

THE CROATIAN SPECIAL POLICE (SPECIJALNA POLICIJA, OR SP)

Founded in 1990 and built around the existing airborne special-forces unit, this 3,000-strong force largely comprised regular police officers.

THE CROATIAN DEFENCE COUNCIL (HRVATSKO VIJECE OBRANE, OR HVO)

The military arm of the Croatian community of Herzeg-Bosnia, founded in 1992, was incorporated into the Army of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the end of the war.

THE YUGOSLAV PEOPLE'S ARMY (JUGOSLAVENSKA NARODNA ARMIJA, OR JNA)

First appearing in 1945, the JNA (pictured above) was dissolved in 1992 following the independence of Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia. It later reformed into the Army of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

THE ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIAN KRAJINA (SRPSKA VOJSKA KRAJINE, OR SVK)

Formed in 1992, the SVK constituted some 55,000 soldiers until its dissolution in 1995.

THE ARMY OF REPUBLIKA SRPSKA (VOJSKA REPUBLIKE SRPSKE, OR VRS)

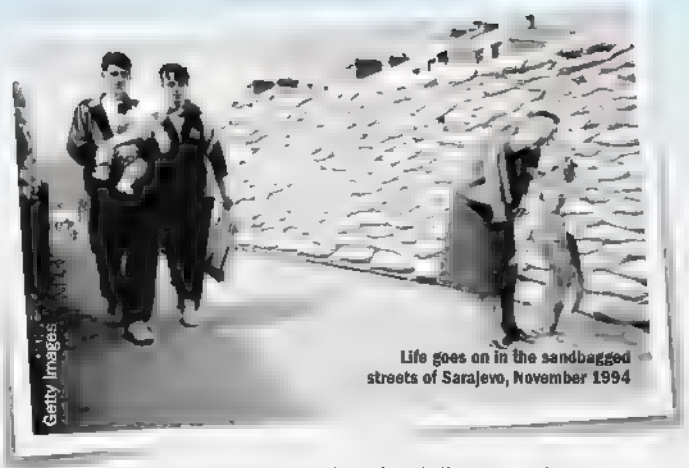
The VRS came about in 1992 when 80,000 Serbs were discharged from the Yugoslav People's Army.

THE ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (ARMIJA REPUBLIKE BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE, OR ARBIH)

Formed in 1992 from various paramilitary units, the police and former JNA members, the ARBIH once comprised some 200,000 troops, including up to 6,000 Mujahideen fighters.

of Croatia as possible, and soon established the Republic of Serbian Krajina (RSK) along the western border.

The early part of the war was dominated by the indiscriminate shelling of Croatian cities in the south, irrespective of their civilian population. The UNESCO World Heritage Site of Dubrovnik was attacked, causing outrage in the West and resulting in a weapons embargo – although this only served to hurt the Croatian Army, which had to resort to weapons smuggling to supply its forces.



Getty Images

Life goes on in the sandbagged streets of Sarajevo, November 1994

In August 1991, the city of Vukovar became the focus of the fighting when the Croatians attacked a number of military installations. In response, the Yugoslav Army launched a huge offensive in the area, using tanks, APCs and artillery pieces to relieve a besieged garrison. As the Croats fell back to Vukovar, so the JNA was drawn into a battle it never intended to enter: strategically unimportant but progressively symbolic.

By the end of September, Vukovar was surrounded by 36,000 JNA troops and numerous heavy weapons. The city's defence relied on the newly formed 204th Vukovar Brigade – around 1,800 untrained men led by a handful of officers. However, the JNA's tactic of using tanks along enclosed roads continually fell foul of the defenders' anti-tank weapons, which would disable the lead vehicle, allowing the rest of the column to be destroyed. A lack of infantry support also hampered the JNA's advances.

Having failed to make inroads with its armour, the Yugoslav Army turned to artillery and rocket barrages, shelling the city with more than 700,000 missiles at a rate of 12,000 a day – a bombardment comparatively more intense than at Stalingrad in 1942. By the end of the battle, Vukovar and its surroundings had been hit by more than 2.5 million shells, with a death toll estimated to be as high as 5,000.

After four months of fighting, Vukovar fell to the superior force, and many of its remaining inhabitants were massacred as part of the paramilitary's program of ethnic cleansing. Indeed, the outbreak of war was an excuse for extremist groups to unleash their xenophobic cravings. One such outfit was "the Tigers", led by Željko "Arkan" Ražnatovic – a paramilitary organisation with its roots in football violence.

But the battle had taken its toll. Morale among the JNA's conscripts was almost non-existent, with high levels of desertion, and the army was exhausted, having expended vast amounts of men and machinery.

With Croatian independence gaining international recognition, and the JNA ill equipped to capture any more territory, a UN-sponsored ceasefire came into operation in January 1992. This was reinforced by the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), with an initial contingent of 14,000 peacekeeping troops despatched to Croatia.

IN JUNE, CROATIAN FORCES ATTACKED THE 7KM-LONG HUMANITARIAN-AID "CONVOY OF JOY", MURDERING EIGHT DRIVERS AND LOOTING ITS CONTENTS

The JNA withdrew from Croatia, but some of its men and machinery remained there as the Army of the Republic of Serbian Krajina (Srpska Vojska Krajine, or SVK), maintaining a foothold in the country. Smaller skirmishes continued as Croatia fought to regain territory lost to the Serbian forces and relieve its besieged cities.

Longest-ever siege

In 1992, the conflict spread to Bosnia Herzegovina, the central region of Yugoslavia. Ethnically diverse, its make-up was 44 per cent Muslim Bosnians (or Bosniaks), 33 per cent Serbs and seven per cent Croats. The final six per cent considered themselves "Yugoslavian". Following a public referendum, its government declared independence from Yugoslavia on

1994 TIMELINE

FEBRUARY – JULY

A ceasefire is signed, effectively ending the Croat-Bosniak war. Croatian and Bosnian forces form an alliance against the Serbs.

Members of the Serbian-backed Bosnian Serb Army perpetrate the Srebrenica massacre, in which more than 8,000 male Bosniaks are murdered.

1995

AUGUST – NOVEMBER

Operation Storm sees the Croatian Army, supported by the Bosniak ARBIH, attack and capture the Republic of Serbian Krajina, lifting the siege of Bihac. It's also supported by Operation Deliberate Force, in which NATO aircraft target Serb installations.

The Bosnian war ends with the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement. Some 60,000 troops of the NATO Implementation Force (IFOR) are deployed to enforce the peace.

1998 — 2006

FEBRUARY – MARCH

War breaks out between the Albanian Kosovo Liberation Army and forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. After 15 months of fighting, the signing of the Kumanovo Treaty signals an end to hostilities.

Former Serbian President Slobodan Milošević dies of a heart attack in his prison cell in The Hague, Netherlands, while awaiting trial for war crimes.

3 March 1992. The Bosnian Serbs immediately severed political ties, forming the Republika Srpska, and the JNA forces previously operating in Croatia moved in to secure Serbian territory. Some 13,000 Bosnian Serbs surrounded Sarajevo, beginning a siege that would last until February 1996 – the longest in modern history – and cost more than 11,500 lives.

Six months previously, the region's Croatian contingent had formed the Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia, with the eventual intention of seceding from Bosnia and uniting with Croatia. To this end, an agreement was signed in May 1992 between the Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadžic and Bosnian Croat leader Mate Boban. Its aim was to limit conflict between the Serbs and the Croats, so they could instead focus on taking Bosniak territory.

Herzeg-Bosnia's military arm – the Croatian Defence Council (Hrvatsko Vijece Obrane, or HVO) – then declared itself the only legal military force in the Croat-inhabited parts of the state, signalling the start of the breakdown in relations between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Reduced to rubble

Despite armed confrontations instigated by both sides, the uneasy alliance between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina continued for the remainder of 1992, with members of the HVO and the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Armija Republike Bosne i Hercegovine, or ARBiH) often fighting side-by-side against the Bosnian Serbs. But by October, Croatian forces were openly attacking ARBiH troops and Bosniak civilians, including an assault on the town of Prozor near Sarajevo. By the end of the year, most of central Bosnia was under Croatian control, and the largely Muslim Bosnian Army found itself at war with both the Croat-backed HVO and the Serbian Army of Republika Srpska (Vojska Republike Srpske, or VRS), supported by the JNA.

Over the course of 1993, the conflict would descend into a series of horrifying events as Croat forces stepped up their anti-Bosniak campaign. In January 1993, they hit Gornji Vakuf, an historic town that held strategic importance due to its location en route to central Bosnia. The HVO demanded that the Bosnian forces there surrender the town, but they refused. This sparked a seven-month offensive in which the town came under heavy artillery and tank fire.

On 3 April, the HVO initiated a plan to attack nine towns in the vicinity of Gornji Vakuf, purging them of Bosnian Muslims in what was known as "the Lašva Valley cleansing". The worst atrocity took place in Ahmici, where a Croatian anti-terrorist unit called "the Jokers" entered the village and systematically murdered around 200 people. Bodies were found in houses, where adults and children had been burned alive.

In June, Croatian forces attacked the 7km-long humanitarian-aid "Convoy of Joy", murdering eight drivers and looting its contents, which were meant for Bosniak refugees. Then, in November, the Stari Most (or "Old Bridge") was targeted and destroyed during the attack on Mostar. This beautiful, 13th-century medieval city had been under siege for nine months, with many of its historic Ottoman buildings reduced to rubble.

This sequence of appalling events – including the murder of children, rape and pointless destruction of important pieces of Muslim architecture – did much to sway international opinion away from Croatia.

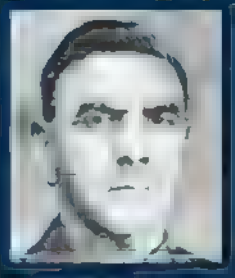
The conflict in Bosnia was made even more incendiary by the variety of factions and alliances taking part. Muslims and Serbs fought against Croats in Herzegovina; Croats and Serbs fought against Muslims in central Bosnia; and rival Muslim forces fought each other in north-west Bosnia. As well as trained military units, there were local militia, criminal gangs, paramilitary groups, and overseas volunteers and mercenaries.

Fighters from the UK, Australia and the US came to fight for the Croats. A dedicated Croatian 103rd (International) Infantry Brigade was formed, alongside one for Italian and one for French fighters – the Garibaldi Battalion and the Groupe Jacques Doriot, respectively.

Controversially, the Bosniak forces were in turn bolstered by Muslim holy fighters, or Mujahideen, from North Africa and the Middle East – invited to help by Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic. The perceived presence of Islamic fundamentalism in Europe, amid allegations of massacres and mutilations, merely proved to be a political liability. ▶

Bosnian Serb tanks patrol a road near the Omarska death camp, Bosnia-Herzegovina, October 1995

KEY FIGURES

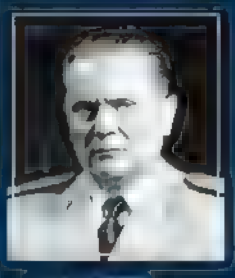


ANTE PAVELIC

During the Second World War, Pavelic led Croatian terrorist group the Ustaše, which sought independence from Yugoslavia. When the Nazis invaded the country in 1941, Pavelic was made head of the independent State of Croatia, whereupon he began persecuting the Serbs and Jews who lived there. After the war, he fled and went into hiding.

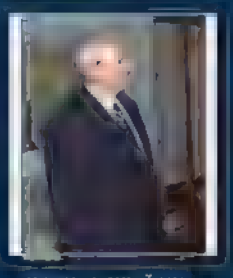
DRAZA MIHAILOVIC

During the Nazi occupation of Yugoslavia, Serbian Mihailovic led a nationalist resistance group called the Chetniks. However, the organisation's fight was against not only Hitler's forces but also the communist Partisans (see next entry). And when the latter, Mihailovic was arrested and sentenced to death.



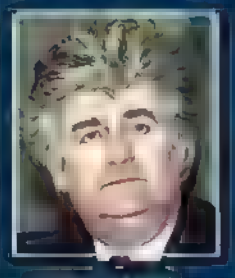
JOSIP BROZ TITO

Tito led the communist Partisans in a resistance against Hitler's Nazis. The group sought a federal, multi-ethnic state and was prepared to fight for it: with Russia's support, it drove the Germans out of Yugoslavia. Tito was made Prime Minister of the newly liberated country, which enjoyed a relatively stable period in the short term.



SLOBODAN MILOŠEVIC

Elected President of Serbia in 1989, Miloševic set about inciting nationalistic passions with the aim of creating a "Greater Serbia". In the ensuing years, Serbian forces embarked on a campaign of ethnic cleansing – particularly in Kosovo. Miloševic was arrested for war crimes in 2001 but died in his cell before being sentenced.



RADOVAN KARADZIC

After Bosnia-Herzegovina declared itself independent in 1992, Karadzic named himself President of a new Bosnian Serb republic within the country – the Republika Srpska. Backed by Slobodan Miloševic, his forces began committing atrocities against Bosniaks and Croats. Karadzic was arrested in 2008 after 13 years on the run, and is now on trial for war crimes.

MATE BOBAN

As leader of the Croatian enclave in Bosnia, Boban led a campaign to drive Serbs and Bosniaks out of the territory, armed and financed by Zagreb. However, following a peace treaty with Radovan Karadzic's Bosnian Serbs in 1993, the two sides formed an alliance against the Muslims in the country. Boban died of a stroke in 1997.

A woman [illegible] bullet-ridden [illegible] Between the [illegible] 1996, the Bosnian [illegible] the longest siege [illegible] 13,000 Bosnian Serbs [illegible]

As Croatian influence spread across Bosnia and into Herzegovina in the south, Bosniak and Serb leaders were removed from office, Croatian currency was introduced and the Bosniak residents found themselves increasingly persecuted, with many being detained in concentration camps

But the tide was turning: a series of major offensives by the Bosnian Army during June saw it retake the regions around Travnik, Kakanj and Zenica in central Bosnia. Again, the hostilities were marked by torture, as well as the killing of civilians and surrendered HVO troops

The army's continued success saw it liberate the city of Mostar in September and recapture areas of Herzegovina, including those belonging to the Croatian republic of Herzeg-Bosnia. The conflict against the Bosniaks had proven disastrous for the Bosnian Croats: after holding 20 per cent of the country at the beginning of hostilities, they now held less than ten per cent.

The Croat-Bosniak war finally ended on 23 February 1994 when, under diplomatic pressure from the US, the HVO and Bosnian Army commanders signed a ceasefire. A peace deal was agreed in March, which established the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and forced an alliance between Bosnian and Croatian armies against the Serb forces.

Serbian soldiers fire their howitzers at Croatian targets, Obrovac, Croatia, February 1993

Getty Images

Severely damaged

In 1993, Croatian forces were striking out to the south in the Zadar region on the Adriatic, aiming to liberate the airport and a strategically important area around the ruins of Maslenica Bridge, which had been destroyed in 1991. With the JNA now occupied in Bosnia, the Serbian Krajina (RSK) forces were soon overwhelmed

The Croatians moved on to the Peruca hydroelectric dam on the River Cetina and captured it from Serb militia. The Serbs had planted the 65m-high dam with more than 35 tons of explosives, with the intention of blowing it up and flooding the land downstream. Only the actions of UNPROFOR Colonel Mark Gray of the Royal Marines prevented another humanitarian disaster. The retreating Serbs managed to blow some of the explosives, but Gray had, at the risk of being disciplined for exceeding his authority, lowered the water level enough to make the dam secure. Though severely damaged, the dam held and his actions prevented the deaths or displacement of more than 20,000 Croatians.

Another major offensive took place in September, in an attempt to recapture the Lika region of southern Croatia and halt the shelling of Gospic. Operation Medak Pocket saw the Croats drive south-west, forcing SVK forces back. The Serbs counter-attacked to regain ground, and when both sides had reached an impasse, they reverted to long-range artillery attacks, with UN forces reporting as many as 6,000 explosions.

Under diplomatic pressure, the Croatians agreed to a ceasefire, which was signed on 15 September. Troops of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry were sent as a buffer between Croat and Serb forces, but came under fire from the Croatians. A firefight ensued, in which the Canadian positions were shelled. With help from two French mechanised units, the Canadians repelled the Croatian forces, which agreed a ceasefire the next day. When the Canadians were eventually allowed to cross the Croatian front line, they found that all the Serb buildings had been reduced to rubble, and found 16 mutilated corpses with no other signs of life

The war rolled on into 1994 but, after the February ceasefire treaty ending the Croat-Bosniak war, the Croatian Army was now operating with the Bosnian ARBiH troops against the Serbs.

> THE LASTING IMPRESSIONS OF THE WARS IN YUGOSLAVIA ARE OF UGLY NEWS REPORTS OF MASSACRES, MUTILATIONS AND MASS GRAVES

Up until now, NATO's involvement had been in a (largely ineffective) peacekeeping role under UN guidance, setting up safe zones and endeavouring to look after the vast number of refugees. But when Serbian aircraft violated the no-fly zone over Banja Luka – part of the UN's Operation Deny Flight – the organisation fired its first shots since its formation in 1949

On 28 February 1994, six Serb J-21 Jastrebs and two J-22 Orao aircraft were intercepted by four F-16s of the 526th Fighter Squadron based in Germany. Four of the Jastrebs were shot down before the rest escaped over the border.

The last major battle of the war took place in August 1995. As part of Operation Storm, the Croatian Army attacked the Republic of Serb Krajina across an encircling 390-mile front, supported by the 3,100 men of the Croatian special police in the west, and troops of the ARBiH in the east. It was to be the largest land battle since the Second World War, ending the three-year-long siege of Bihac and returning 18 per cent of the country back to Croatian control. More than 500 members of the SVK were killed, and the Croatian Army captured 4,000 prisoners. Overall, the campaign provoked the exodus of some 200,000 Serbs from Croatia.

The success of the operation enabled the Joint Croatian and Bosnian forces to launch a major assault eastwards on the Bosnian Serb Army of Republika Srpska (VRS), headquartered in the Banja Luka region of Bosnia. In September, Operation Mistral saw co-ordinated attacks by the joint forces capture eight major towns and cities in just seven days. Precision bombing raids accompanied the assault, with NATO aircraft targeting VRS positions. NATO's military involvement had steadily increased after the shelling of a designated UN "safe zone" in Goražde in March 1994, after which a Bosnian Serb command post was bombed by two US F-16s – the first such operation in the organisation's history.

War crimes

But sustained airstrikes were triggered in August 1995, by the second Markele massacre in Sarajevo, when the marketplace was shelled, killing 43 civilians. Over the next three months, NATO's Operation Deliberate Force flew 3,500 sorties, dropped more than a thousand bombs and hit 338 Bosnian Serb targets.

With their position now untenable, the Bosnian Serbs called for peace talks, which led to the signing of the Dayton Agreement on 14 December 1995. The act created two self-governing entities within Bosnia – the Bosnian Serb Republic and the Bosniak-Croat Federation

The lasting impressions of the wars in Yugoslavia are of news reports of massacres, mutilations and mass graves. Civilians were deemed a viable target, and the phrase "ethnic cleansing" was introduced into everyday language. Estimates of the number of fatalities vary between 60,000 and 300,000. More than 70 men, from all sides, have been convicted of war crimes. That number includes Slobodan Miloševic, the first head of state to answer to such charges. However, he was never convicted, having died in his prison cell in 2006.

The break-up of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia concluded when Montenegro declared its independence from Serbia in June 2006. After 83 years of existence, Yugoslavia was consigned to the history books.

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"LET US REST UNDER THE SHADE OF THE TREES"

American Civil War: It helped to shape the US as we know it today, and led to slavery being abolished in the country – but at the cost of thousands of lives. Now, as Paul Dimery explains, a new tour allows you to honour those who fell in America's greatest domestic conflict...

THE CANNON ON THE HILL STARES down on the peop e below. Glimmering n the sunshine, its sleek, almost stately demeanour belies what it's capab e of: namely, delivering death. And yet those peop e – young children, adults, elderly couples – do not budge, nor show fear or panic Instead, they gaze silently into the distance, sharing a moment of peace and reflection.

War no longer belongs here. As the graves of thousands of forgotten men attest, it has done enough damage. Around 150 years ago, these fallen sp rits were once fit so diers, fight ng for their states, their beliefs, their lives. The American Civil War erupted soon after the Republican candidate Abraham Lincoln became President in 1861. Lincoln's will to abolish slavery did not sit well w th the southern states, where the practice was r fe, and seven of them seceded to form the Confederate States of America (with four more joining them later). Tens ons erupted into a ful-scale conflict on 12 April 1861 after Confederate troops fired upon Fort Sumter in South Carolina, which was held by Union forces. What followed was a four year struggle that saw more than three m ion men take up arms and fight to the death – more than 620,000 lost their l'ves, with another 275,000 wounded.

One of those casua ties was Confederate General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, who died from complications related to pneumonia in May 1863. On his deathbed, as he slipped peaceful y away, he uttered the words, "Let us cross over the river and rest under the shade of the trees" ▶

A solitary cannon provides a poignant reminder of the disruption forever America in the mid-19th Century

The quaint town of Harpers Ferry, where, in 1859, John Brown and his men raided the federal armoury

As *History Of War* visited the poignantly peaceful cemeteries dedicated to the fallen heroes of the Civil War – part of a dedicated tour that delves into the history of this legendary conflict – those words seemed apt. The American Civil War Tour takes in many of the sites you've heard so much about, including the battlefields at Gettysburg, Petersburg and Richmond, but where once there was mayhem and misery, now there is solitude and sobriety.

Ghosts of Gettysburg

The tour begins with your flight to Washington DC, which will be your base for two nights While here, you can enjoy a half-day city tour by coach that takes in an introductory excursion to the celebrated Museum of American History. This will provide the perfect opportunity to swot up on your Civil War knowledge (although, if you're not feeling up to absorbing too much information just yet, your tour guides – carefully chosen for their expertise on the subject – will fill you in on important details when you arrive at battlefields, cemeteries and other locations).

The following day, the tour begins in earnest with a visit to the battleground at Gettysburg.

THE ENGAGEMENT AT GETTYSBURG IN JULY 1863 IS OFTEN QUOTED AS THE CIVIL WAR'S TURNING POINT

The engagement here in July 1863 is often quoted as the Civil War's turning point, as it resulted in the Confederate forces, under the command of General Robert E Lee, retreating back to Virginia after their attempted second invasion into Union territory. In November of the same year, Abraham Lincoln delivered his famous Gettysburg Address here at the dedication ceremony for the Gettysburg National Cemetery. Close your eyes and you can almost hear his words: *"The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here."*

The day ends – for those who are brave enough – with a Ghosts of Gettysburg tour, on which you can hear about the ghouls that are said to still roam the battlefield here

Slave uprising

After a good night's rest (you'll probably need it), it's on to the battlefield at Antietam, scene of the bloodiest one-day battle in US history, in which General Lee's invasion of Maryland was ended. This is followed by a visit to the picture-postcard town of Harpers Ferry, where, in 1859, white abolitionist John Brown and his party of 21 men (five of them black) launched an attack on the federal armoury with the intention of arming slaves and inciting an uprising. The plan was thwarted by local farmers and militiamen, with most of the participants being killed or captured. However, as a result of the action, Brown became a martyr. ▶

This painting depicts Confederate and Union soldiers clashing at Chattanooga in 1863. The battle resulted in one of Ulysses S Grant's most famous victories

Arlington National Cemetery

Shutterstock

The London American.

MAP OF THE SEAT OF WAR,

POSITIONS OF THE REBEL FORCES, BATTERIES, ENTRENCHMENTS AND ENCAMPMENTS IN VIRGINIA—THE FORTIFICATIONS FOR THE PROTECTION OF RICHMOND.

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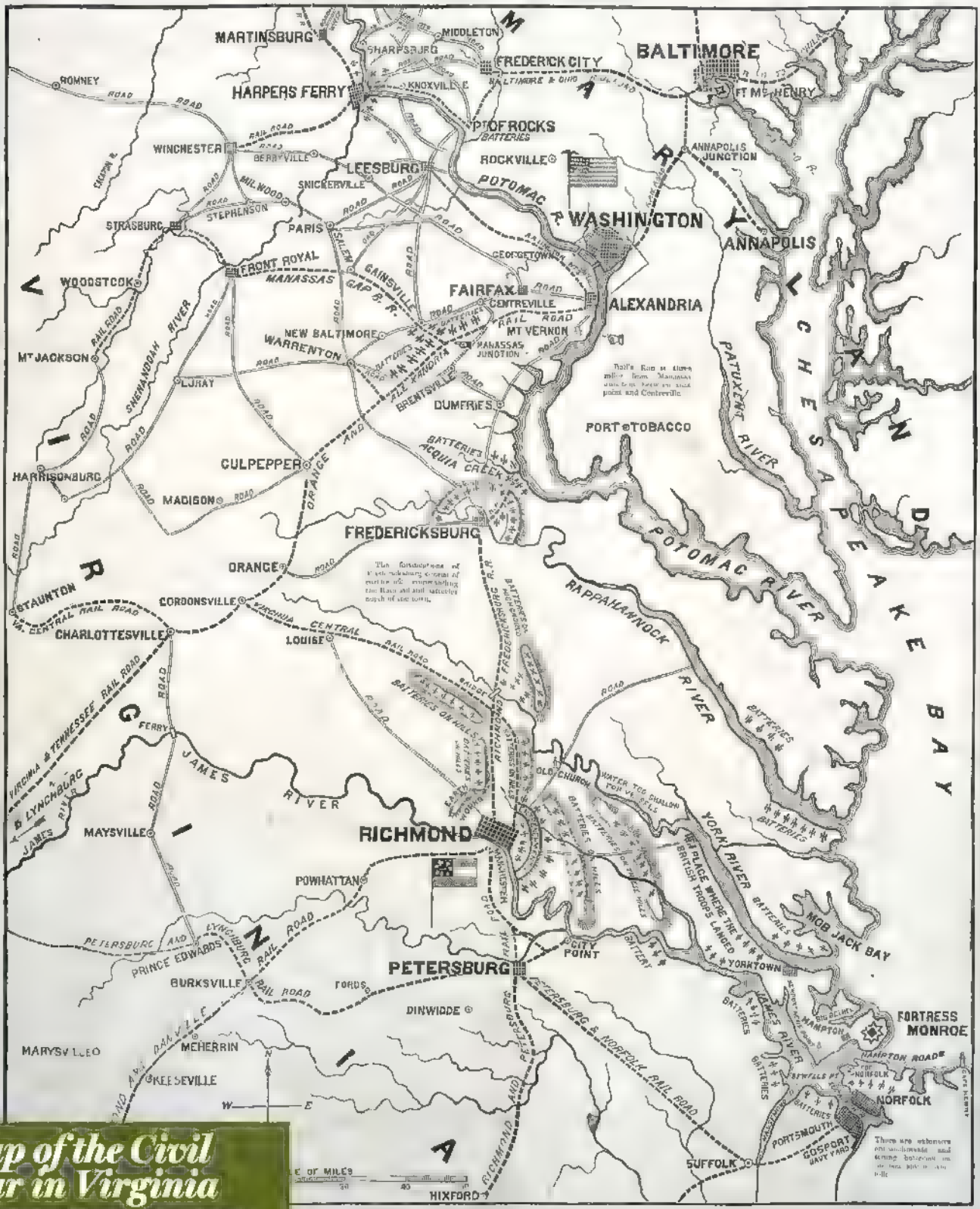


Washington to Manassas Junction	35 miles.	From Washington to Baltimore	38 miles.
" Warrenton	49 "	" " Annapolis	23 "
" Culpepper	70 "	From Baltimore to Frederick City	60 "
" Charlottesville	1.8 "	" " " Point of Rocks	70 "
" Fairfax	14 "	From Manassas Junction to Front Royal	51 "
" Leesburg	31 "	" " Strasburg	61 "
" Harper's Ferry	51 "		

At the Battle of Bull's Run, fought on Sunday, the 21st July, about 22,000 Unionists and about 60,000 Rebels were in the engagement. After a contest of twelve hours, the Unionists were repulsed, with a loss of nearly five hundred men killed and wounded. The Rebels sustained a much greater loss.

Map of the Civil War in Virginia

This map, dated 1861, featured in a newssheet for US expats living in London. Depicting the seat of war in Virginia, it includes the sites of major incidents during the conflict (Petersburg, Harpers Ferry) and fortifications for the protection of the capital, Richmond.

PRICE ONE PENNY

Mary Evans

Day Five sees the tour arrive in Lynchburg As an important transportation centre for the Confederacy army, this became a target for the Union forces under Ma,or General David Hunter, resulting in a ferocious batt e between some 30,000 men in June 1864. Despite being slightly outnumbered by the Union invaders, the Confederate army under Lieutenant Genera Jubal Anderson Early emerged victorious.

Longest-ever siege

The next port of call, the following day, is where the Civil War fina ly came to an end for General Robert E Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. Appomattox saw the Confederate leader surrender on 9 April 1865, signal ng the end of the southern states' attempt to create a separate nation. It also set the stage for the emergence of an expanded and more powerful federal government, and the adoption of the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments to the Constitution.

Following a visit to the Museum of the Confederacy in Appomattox – home to Civil War uniforms, weapons and other memorabil a – it's on to the Petersburg batt efield, where the Union army he d the Confederates in a 292-day siege – the longest in American history.

Day Seven's itinerary sees the tour returning to Washington DC, where there is an opt onal tour of Arlington Nat onal Cemetery. Here, spread across 624 acres, are some 400,000

WHEN VISITING THESE BATTLEFIELDS, THE SENSES ARE OFTEN OVERWHELMED BY THE SCALE OF THE CASUALTIES

graves, many of them the final resting place of American Civil War veterans, as well as those who lost their lives in subsequent conflicts This is one of the most evocative, and sobering, aspects of the tour, as you're invited to reflect on the sheer number of people who have g ven their lives for their princip es – or, at least, the principles of their masters. Looking at the seemingly end ess rows of headstones, it's hard not to ask yourself philosophical questions: did these men die in vain or have their sacrifices resulted in a more liberated and tolerant world?

The penu timate day of the tour includes a visit to Manassas/Bull Run, wh ch saw the first major land batt e of the Civil War in July 1861 – at the time, the blood est engagement in American history, with around 850 men killed and nearly 3,000 wounded – and a second

Appomattox was the scene of Robert E Lee's surrender on 9 April 1865

spirit of america / Shutterstock.com

Ulysses S Grant

While he's best remembered for being the 18th President of the United States (1869-1877), Ulysses S Grant was also a successful commander during the Civil War. When Abraham Lincoln put out a call for 75,000 Union volunteers following the Confederate assault on Fort Sumter that ignited the war, a meeting was called in Galena, Illinois, where Grant lived. As the only military man in the area (he'd spent more than a decade in the army), Grant was asked to lead the meeting and co-ordinate recruitment in the town. His efforts were recognised when he was promoted to Colonel of the unruly 21st Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment in June 1861, and this was fol lo Lincoln assigning him the position of Brigadier General. In September of that year, he was given command of the District of South East Missouri, and his triumphs at Fort Henry and Fort Donelson, Tennessee, earned him the nickname "Unconditional Surrender". Further victories at Vicksburg and Chattanooga cemented his reputation and following the conflict, President Andrew Johnson named Grant Secretary of War over the newly reunited nation. In 1868, running against Johnson, he became President.

c ash in August of the fo owing year Then it's time to load up your suitcases for the return fl ght to London the next morning

Torn apart

As I've reported in previous issues of *History Of War*, battlefie d visits are rewarding and humbling experiences that not only expand your know edge of what happened at these p aces and why (there isn't always a genuinely good reason), but also provide you w th a sense of perspective: no matter how bad your own personal prob ems might seem, they surely pa e into comparison to what thousands of men and women suffered on these grounds.

The American C'vil War Tour – while a lot more expensive than similar excurs ons to European batt efields – is an engrossing experience, especially as it educates you about a war that you'll likely know much less about than, say, the First or Second Wor d Wars. You'll hear about how the conflict nurtured the skills and strategies of future US Presidents, d vided opinion among ordinary c tizens and led to the American Constitut on being radica ly changed

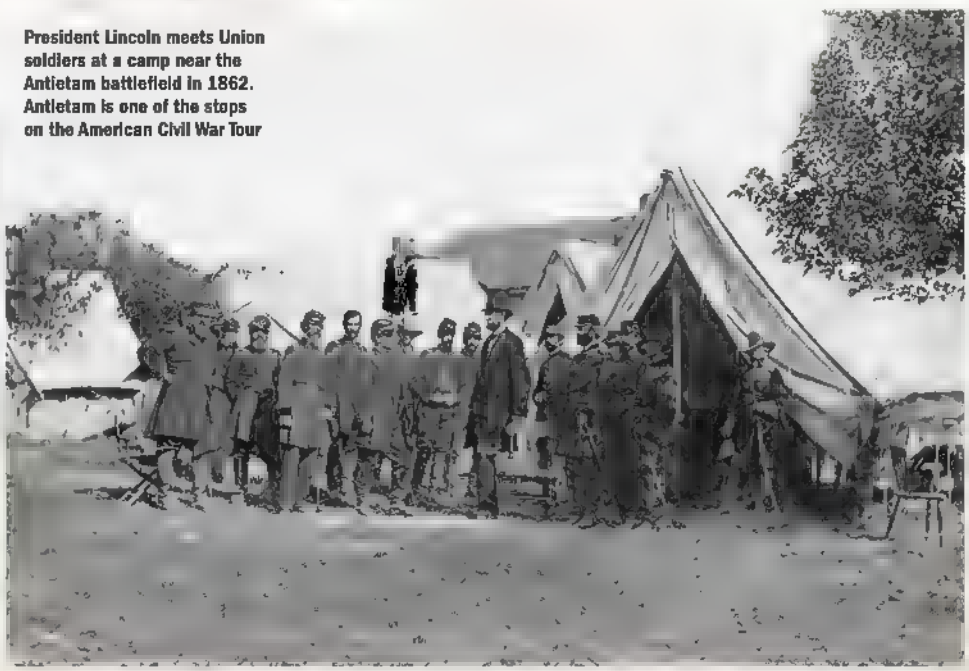
Sa d a spokesman for Leger Holidays, which is running the tour, "The American Civil War battlef elds have been ma nta ned in such a fashion that they present the vis tor with the ability to walk the ground a most exactly as it was. Many artefacts have been preserved in place, and our guides have the ab ity to bring history to life in these authentic settings."

The American Civil War Tour

Leger Holidays will be running an American Civil War Tour from 22 September of this year (£1,749 per person) and another one starting on 21 September 2015 (£1,849 per person). These prices include return scheduled flights from London to Washington, seven nights' accommodation sharing a twin room on a room-only basis, airport taxes/transfers, air-conditioned coach travel, an escorted guide and hotel porterage (one bag per person).
For further details, call 0844 324 9256 or visit www.visitbattlefields.co.uk

BATTLEFIELD TOURS by Leger

President Lincoln meets Union soldiers at a camp near the Antietam battlefield in 1862. Antietam is one of the stops on the American Civil War Tour



HISTORY of WAR

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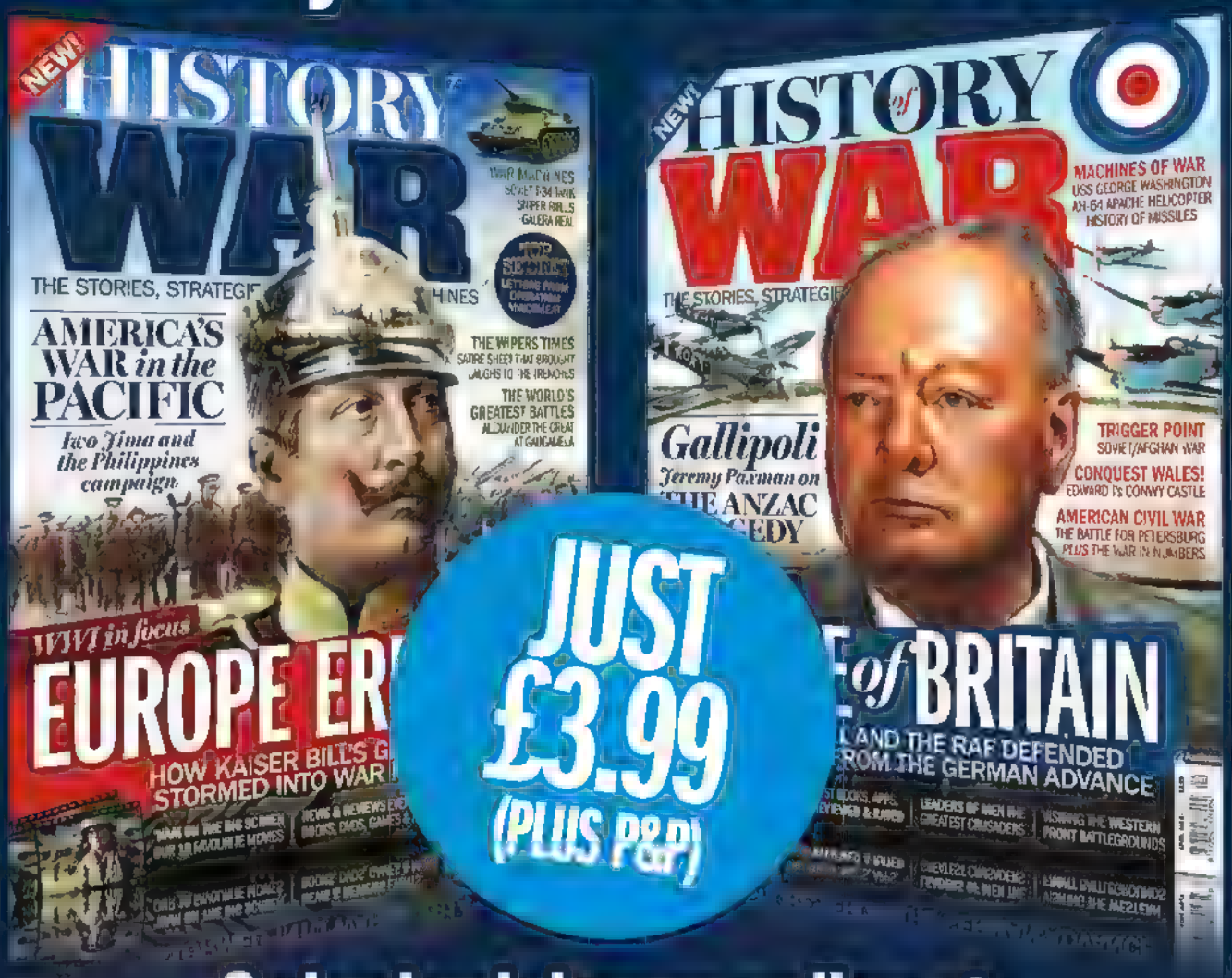

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BATTLES *in* BRIEF

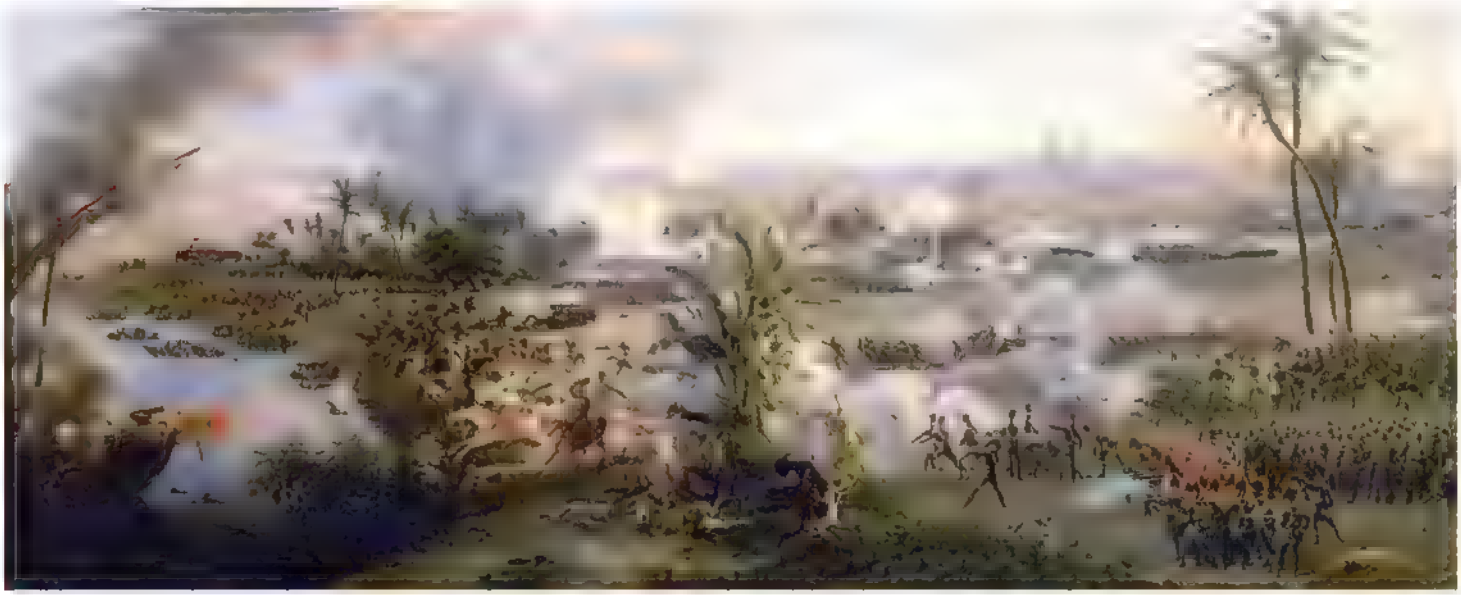
PART TWO

FRANCE
Revolution to Empire

French Revolutionary Wars: By 1798, Napoleon had established himself as a military *tour de force*. But over the following decade, he would meet some of his toughest challenges…

NAPOLEON TAKES OVER

IN 1798, NAPOLEON BONAPARTE EMBARKED on a campaign in Egypt that brought him more military glory but was strategically negated by the strength of British seapower. Returning to France in the autumn of 1799, he seized power in a *coup d'état*. By then, France had suffered a number of reverses at the hands of the Second Coalition formed by Russia, Britain, Austria and the Ottoman Empire; and in Italy, Russian General Alexander Suvorov had all but driven out the French. Russia withdrew from the war, however, and Napoleon reversed the situation with victory at Marengo. By 1802, he'd coerced his foes into accepting peace largely on French terms; and by the time war resumed in 1805, he'd become Emperor of France.



THE EGYPTIAN CAMPAIGN
THE PYRAMIDS

On the morning of 2 July 1798, Napoleon and his forces landed at the port of Alexandria in northern Egypt, hell-bent on conquering the country, which was at that time an Ottoman province governed by the Mamelukes. The French infantry advanced in a series of gruelling marches towards Cairo, where an army of elite Mameluke cavalry and *fellahin* (peasant) infantry prepared to counter them.

On 20 July, French scouts discovered the enemy camped within sight of the Pyramids at Giza. The following day, Napoleon's infantry drew up in squares six men deep, with artillery at each corner. Clad in gorgeous silks and heavily armed with sabres and pistols, the Mameluke cavalry hurled themselves against the squares with ferocious battle cries. According to Napoleon's official report of the skirmish, the cavalry "was allowed to approach within 50 paces and was then covered with a hail of case shot and bullets".

The French seized the initiative, advancing quickly along the Nile bank supported by the guns of the river flotilla, and the Mameluke cavalry were forced to flee. Some tried to swim the river in search of safety, but at least a thousand men drowned in the melee.

▲ **DEFEAT OF THE MAMELUKES** Louis-François Lejeune's 1806 painting *The Battle Of The Pyramids* depicts flamboyantly dressed Mamelukes fleeing the field

The facts

DATE 21 July 1798

LOCATION Embabeh, near Cairo, Egypt

FORCES French, 25,000; Egyptian: 20,000–30,000 (6,000 Mameluke cavalry)

CASUALTIES French: 29 killed, 260 wounded; Egyptian: 4,000 killed (2,000 Mamelukes)

THE EGYPTIAN CAMPAIGN
ABOUKIR BAY

The French fleet that took Napoleon's forces to Egypt was commanded by Admiral Brueys. It was fortunate to reach Alexandria unscathed, as a British fleet under Admiral Horatio Nelson had been hunting for it, hampered by a lack of frigates – the "eyes" of the group. However, on 1 August 1798, Nelson finally tracked the French down to their anchorage in Aboukir Bay.

The British sailed in to attack, though only a few hours of daylight remained. The French were taken by surprise, with many men ashore fetching supplies. They were anchored in shallow water and one British ship ran aground, but others led by HMS Goliath anchored alongside the foremost French ships and raked them with broadsides. The French could not reply because all their guns were on the seaward side. Nelson, aboard HMS Vanguard, led the other half of his fleet to the seaward side of the French ships, which were thus battered from both sides.

The French put up a fierce fight, especially the 120-gun L'Orient. Nelson himself was wounded in the head; Brueys was cut in two by a cannonball. L'Orient caught fire and its gunpowder store exploded. The fighting continued all night and, by dawn, the French were routed. Only three ships escaped, leaving Napoleon cut off in Egypt.

▼ FRENCH ON FIRE The remaining ships of the French fleet, commanded by Admiral Brueys, were ablaze by the closing phase of the Battle of Aboukir Bay

The facts

DATE 1-2 August 1798

LOCATION Northern Egypt

FORCES British: 14 ships; French: 13 ships

CASUALTIES French: nine ships captured, two destroyed, 2,000 men killed or wounded. British: 213 men killed, 677 wounded

THE EGYPTIAN CAMPAIGN
ABOUKIR

In September 1798, the Ottoman Empire declared war on France. To forestall a possible Ottoman descent on Egypt, in early 1799 Napoleon marched north to Acre, the capital of Ottoman Syria. The city managed to hold out through a fierce 63-day siege, after which Napoleon led his army – now decimated by disease – back to Egypt.

On 11 July 1799, the Ottoman army of Rhodes, led by Mustapha Pasha, landed on the Egyptian coast at Aboukir. Within two weeks, Napoleon had marched a force of 10,000 men from Cairo to confront the Turks. After the French infantry had fought its way into the midst of the enemy, Joachim Murat led a cavalry charge. Under the shock, the Turkish forces fell apart, fleeing to their ships. Despite this victory, the next month Napoleon returned to France.

▼ BLIND PANIC Joachim Murat, commander of the French cavalry, led a charge against Mustapha Pasha's forces. The resulting panic caused the Turks to fall apart

The facts

DATE 25 July 1799

LOCATION Northern Egypt

FORCES French: 10,000; Ottoman: 15,000

CASUALTIES French: 220 killed, 750 wounded. Ottoman: 2,000 killed

MARINE SWORD The hilt of this French marine sword of the Napoleonic period features a cockerel's head, a French revolutionary motif that symbolised hope and faith

THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN
MARENGO

A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH Jean-Simon Berthelemy's work *Napoleon In The Battle Of Marengo* (date unknown) depicts the leader in a frantic battle with the Austrians

In May 1800, Napoleon – now First Consul – led the newly formed Army of Reserve across the Alps via the St Bernard Pass. Cannon barrels were placed in hollowed-out tree trunks and dragged over the ice, snow and rock. The French army came out on the Lombardy plain and marched west to engage the Austrians.

In Turin, Austrian commander Michael von Melas decided that his best course of action was to march east and break through Napoleon's forces, which lay across his line of communications. Not anticipating von Melas' aggressive intentions, Napoleon confidently expected the Austrians to withdraw. When they attacked at Marengo, his forces were scattered, with only around 22,000 immediately available to face von Melas' 31,000. The French were driven back, at points in disarray, and by the afternoon von Melas believed the battle won.

At around 5pm, however, a contingent some 10,000-strong, led by Louis Desaix, arrived on the battlefield and launched a decisive counter attack. Although Desaix was shot through the heart, the French cavalry and infantry routed the weary Austrians. The next day, von Melas signed an armistice, agreeing to evacuate Lombardy.

The facts

DATE 14 June 1800

LOCATION 2km (1 mile) east of Alessandria, northern Italy

FORCES Austrian: 31,000; French: 32,000

CASUALTIES Austrian: 9,400 killed, wounded or taken prisoner; French: 7,000 killed or wounded

THE DANISH CAMPAIGN
COPENHAGEN

In February 1801, Denmark, Russia, Sweden and Prussia formed an armed neutrality league in reaction to British searches of neutral shipping. Britain responded by sending a fleet to the Danish capital under Admiral Sir Hyde Parker, who sent his second-in-command, Horatio Nelson, with 12 ships into the harbour. Nelson had to negotiate sand banks while engaging a defensive line of armed hulks and floating batteries, as well as Danish warships.

When the battle was at its hottest, Parker ordered Nelson to withdraw, but he claimed not to see the signal. After four hours of intensive cannon duels, Danish resistance ceased. Nelson later said, "I've been in 105 [battles], but that of today was the most terrible of them all!"

▼ **SKIRMISH ON THE SEAS** **The British fleet under Admirals Sir Hyde Parker and Horatio Nelson defeated the Danish, causing the dissolution of the League of Northern Powers**

The facts

DATE 2 April 1801

LOCATION Eastern Denmark

FORCES Danish: 18 ships;
British: 33 ships (12 committed to battle)

CASUALTIES Danish: 470 killed, 550 wounded, 1,779 taken prisoner;
British: 254 killed, 689 wounded

THE THIRD COALITION
ULM

By 1805, when the Third Coalition of Britain, Austria, Russia and Sweden was formed to stamp out the French, Napoleon had created the impressive Grande Armée – a force of almost 200,000 men organised into seven corps, each commanded by a marshal. Austria and Russia planned major offensives through northern Italy and across southern Germany into France. Through September, General Mack von Leberich – a successful campaigner during the Austro-Turkish War at the end of the 1700s – led an Austrian army as far as Ulm on the Danube River, where he waited for a Russian army under Prince Mikhail Kutuzov to join him.

Moving faster than their enemies considered possible, most of the Grande Armée reached positions in northern Germany by 24 September. Napoleon then marched the majority of his forces in a sweeping arc behind Mack's army, which was still paralysed at Ulm. Some of Mack's forces attempted to break out of the encirclement, but their efforts were largely in vain and, after a few sharp engagements, Mack eventually surrendered to the French on 20 October. Following the battle, Napoleon proclaimed, with good reason, "Never has a victory been so complete and less costly."

▼ **SURRENDER TO THE FRENCH** **After the Austrian surrender at Ulm, depicted in this 1806 painting by Paul-Émile Boutigny, General Mack von Leiberich was imprisoned**

The facts

DATE 16-20 October 1805

LOCATION Southern modern-day Germany

FORCES Austrian: 45,000; French: 150,000

CASUALTIES Austrian: 10,000 killed or wounded, 30,000 taken prisoner;
French: 1,500 killed or wounded

THE THIRD COALITION
AUSTERLITZ

Hearing of the Austrian capitulation at Ulm (see previous page), Russian General Mikhail Kutuzov withdrew eastwards, allowing Napoleon to occupy Vienna. Pursuing the Russians put Napoleon's army in an increasingly precarious position. Winter was drawing in and they were advancing through country stripped bare by the retreating Russians. Napoleon gambled on bringing his enemies swiftly to battle before the Austrians could bring new forces into play.

He found the battleground he wanted near the town of Austerlitz. There, he gave the impression of preparing a withdrawal by evacuating the dominant Pratzen Heights. He also disposed his forces so that a weakness was visible on his right, where the line of the Goldbach stream was thinly held. Kutuzov would not rise to this bait, but Emperors Francis of Austria and Alexander of Russia – both present at Austerlitz – were keen on bold offensives. Ignoring Kutuzov, the Austrian generals devised a bold plan to break through the weak French right flank.

At dawn on 2 December, the Allies attacked, throwing their main weight against the French right. Reinforcements under Louis-Nicolas Davout were rushed up to block this thrust, and the Russian infantry were bogged down in swampy land around the Goldbach. As Napoleon had hoped, his opponents threw more forces to his right, drawing troops away from the centre. At 9am, he ordered Jean-de-Dieu Soult to lead his corps onto the Pratzen Heights. They emerged from fog that filled the valley onto the clear plateau, achieving complete surprise. Kutuzov threw in the Russian Imperial Guard cavalry to retake the high ground, to which Napoleon responded by sending in his own Imperial Guard cavalry, driving the Russians back off the heights. Soult was then able to send his men into the rear of the enemy forces still stalled on the Goldbach. The Allies that escaped fled across the frozen lakes, some falling through the ice that cracked under their weight. On the other flank, Russian commander Prince Bagration fared no better and his men were also routed.

Napoleon had achieved his greatest victory. The Austrians immediately sued for peace, while the Russians retreated into Poland.

The facts

DATE 2 December 1805

LOCATION Moravia, modern-day Czech Republic

FORCES French: 73,000;
Allies: 70,000 Russian, 15,000 Austrian

CASUALTIES French: 1,300 killed
7,000 wounded, Allies: 16,000 killed or wounded,
11,500 taken prisoner

▼ ALMIGHTY SCUFFLE **François Gerard's 1810 painting *The Battle Of Austerlitz* captures the fierce fighting of that engagement, which resulted in another victory for Napoleon**

THE ALLIES THAT ESCAPED FLED ACROSS THE FROZEN LAKES, SOME FALLING THROUGH THE ICE THAT CRACKED UNDER THEIR WEIGHT

LORD NELSON
(1758-1805)

Horatio Nelson first came to prominence at the Battle of Cape St Vincent in 1797, where a group of British ships defeated a larger Spanish fleet during the Anglo-Spanish War. Something of a maverick, in his early career he was notorious for ignoring direct orders, but his headstrong boldness was crowned by success at the Battle of the Nile in 1798 and at Copenhagen in 1801. Nelson established a relationship of mutual trust with his captains, who were inspired to show initiative and daring by his example. His determination to lead from the front cost him an eye in 1794, his right arm in 1797 and, finally, his life at Trafalgar in 1805.

FRENCH SUPREMACY

THE STRENGTH OF THE FRENCH ARMY, and Napoleon's military genius, enabled France to achieve a dominance over Europe. The victories at Ulm and Austerlitz were followed by the crushing of the Prussian and Russian armies in 1806-07, and another defeat for Austria in 1809. Napoleon reorganised European borders and political life at will. Only Britain remained unsubdued. Napoleon had planned an invasion but, after the British naval victory at Trafalgar, this never materialised. Instead, France attempted to impose an economic blockade through the Continental System, banning trade between Europe and Britain. French attempts to make all countries conform to this blockade would lead to the next round of fighting.

THE THIRD COALITION
TRAFALGAR

In October 1805, French Admiral Pierre-Charles Villeneuve, commanding a Franco-Spanish fleet off Cadiz, was ordered to sail to the Mediterranean. A British fleet commanded by Lord Horatio Nelson was waiting outside the port. Nelson planned to sail his ships in two columns perpendicular to the Franco-Spanish line, cutting it in the centre and towards the rear. In the ensuing melee, superior British seamanship and gunnery would wreak havoc before the enemy could turn to join the battle.

When Villeneuve sighted Nelson's fleet, he turned back towards Cadiz but could not avoid battle. Nelson headed one of the British columns aboard HMS Victory, Admiral Lord Collingwood the other aboard HMS Royal Sovereign. Victory sailed through the enemy line behind Villeneuve's flagship, Bucentaure, raking it with grapeshot. British vessels took heavy damage, however, from enemy broadsides.

In the afternoon, Victory came alongside the French ship Redoutable. Marines firing down from the masts of the French ship killed many men on Victory's deck, including Nelson, who had shown a reckless disregard for personal safety throughout. The last act of the battle came when the French ship Achille caught fire and exploded, with great loss of life. Eleven French and Spanish ships made it back to Cadiz.

▲ **NELSON SUCCUMBS** Denis Dighton's 1825 painting *The Fall Of Nelson* shows the Admiral mortally wounded (right)

The facts

DATE 21 October 1805

LOCATION Off Cape Trafalgar, south-western Spain

FORCES British: 27 ships of the line
French-Spanish: 33 ships of the line

CASUALTIES British: 449 killed, 1,214 wounded,
French-Spanish: 4,408 killed, 2,545 wounded

WHEN DAVOUT PUSHED FORWARD, THE KING ORDERED A RETREAT THAT QUICKLY TURNED INTO A ROUT

▲ **HEAVY CAVALRY** The French *cuirassiers* wore steel helmets with elaborate ornament, and steel breastplates over their uniforms. Their straight sword was designed for thrusting

▲ **THE START OF THE OCCUPATION** Charles Meynier's 1810 painting *Napoleon in Berlin* depicts the French leader and his troops' arrival in the Prussian capital in October 1806

THE THIRD COALITION
JENA/AUERSTADT

In late 1806, Napoleon concentrated almost his entire Grande Armée against the Prussians, cutting off their forces from Berlin. On 13 October, a corps commanded by Jean Lannes – one of Bonaparte's most daring and talented generals – came up against a large Prussian force at Jena. Believing this to be the main army, Napoleon sent the bulk of his forces to join Lannes, while Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte and Louis-Nicolas Davout were ordered to outflank the Prussians to the north. In fact, the Prussian forces at Jena were the smaller part of their army, commanded by Prince Hohenlohe. The main army under the Duke of Brunswick was further north at Auerstadt.

The battle at Jena began with the French attacking while still moving up their forces, and Hohenlohe desperately awaiting reinforcements. The Prussians were decimated as they stood on the defensive in virtual parade order. Given the French superiority of numbers, their eventual victory was assured.

At Auerstadt, however, Davout found himself facing the bulk of the Prussian army, while Bernadotte wandered between the two battlefields. Davout fought a superb defensive battle. Brunswick was killed early on, leaving Prussian King William III in command. When Davout pushed forward, the King ordered a retreat that turned into a rout. Over the following days, the Prussians were pursued by the French cavalry and Berlin was occupied by 26 October.

The facts

DATE 14 October 1806

LOCATION East of Weimar, modern-day Germany

FORCES French: 121,000; Prussian: 117,000

CASUALTIES French: 12,000 killed or wounded; Prussian: 40,000 killed, wounded or taken prisoner

THE THIRD COALITION
EYLAU

The Prussian defeat at Jena/Auerstadt left the Russians to bear the brunt of Napoleon and his army's aggression. No sooner had they begun their occupation of Berlin than the French set off in pursuit of the Russians and some Prussian remnants into Poland.

In February 1807, the French and Russian forces stumbled into one another at Eylau, both sides calling in reinforcements as battle was engaged. Fighting in a snowstorm, the French came close to defeat when Pierre Augereau's corps, making a frontal attack on the Russian centre directly into the fire of a 70-gun battery, was repulsed with massive casualties. But, as he had been at Aboukir eight years earlier, Joachim Murat proved to be the hero of the day when he charged forward with some 10,000 French cavalry, which swept through the Russian infantry and overwhelmed the cannon.

When French reinforcements under Michel Ney arrived on the scene, Russian commander Levin August von Bennigsen withdrew his men – although he'd certainly not been defeated. It wasn't until the French victory at Friedland the following June that the Russians were crushed, forcing Emperor Alexander to sue for peace

THE COMPASSIONATE LEADER Antoine-Jean Gros' 1807 painting *Napoleon On The Battlefield Of Eylau* depicts the French leader as he sympathetically surveys the wounded

The facts

DATE 8 February 1807

LOCATION North-eastern Poland

FORCES French: 71,000; Russian: 76,000

CASUALTIES French: 25,000 killed or wounded, Russian: 15,000 killed or wounded

THE DANUBE CAMPAIGN
WAGRAM

In 1809, Austria had the temerity to restart war with France. On 9 April, Austrian forces commanded by Archduke Charles, Duke of Teschen, invaded Bavaria. When the French counter-offensive occupied Vienna, Charles' army was positioned on the opposite side of the Danube. Napoleon started to move his forces over the river, but a determined Austrian counter attack on 21-22 May drove the French back with heavy losses. It wasn't until 4 July that Napoleon decided to resume the offensive, but the Austrians mostly held their line in fierce but indecisive fighting up to nightfall.

At dawn, battle resumed with an Austrian attack that threatened to break the French left, until André Masséna's corps repulsed it. On the other flank, Louis-Nicolas Davout captured the key village of Markgrafneusiedl. Napoleon then sent forward 8,000 infantry under Jacques Macdonald, supported by cavalry and artillery, to deliver the final blow. Macdonald drove the Austrians back, but around three-quarters of his men were casualties. The Austrians withdrew, though not in disarray. Austria signed a peace treaty on French terms three months later

The facts

DATE 5-6 July 1809

LOCATION East of Vienna, Austria

FORCES French: 170,000; Austrian: 146,000

CASUALTIES French: 37,000 killed or wounded, Austrians: 40,000 killed or wounded

THE END IS IN SIGHT Napoleon assesses the battlefield ahead of a final push against the Austrians

This feature is an edited extract from the book *Battle: A Visual Journey Through 5,000 Years Of Combat*, by RG Grant. Published by Dorling Kindersley, it is available from both high-street and online book stores, RRP £19.99.

Leaders of Men

BRITISH GENERALS

From "the Black Prince" to "Bloody Bull", Chris Short delves into the lives of the men whose prowess on the battlefield helped to shape Britain as we know it today...

They're the men who helped to make Britain "Great"; the Generals who, in one way or another, contributed to the expansion of the British Empire and led to this small island being recognised as a major force in global politics. It seems a travesty, then, that as a collective nation our knowledge of these leaders tends to be restricted to the brief snippets of information we're given in those occasional TV polls of the most notable Britons. The military achievements of these men deserve greater exposure – hence this feature – but there's more to their stories than just their incredible exploits on the battlefield.

Did you know, for example, that during his reign as Lord Protector of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, Oliver Cromwell banned Christmas celebrations and women from wearing make-up? Or that John Churchill was the man the great Duke of Wellington would have most liked to lead his army? (Pity Churchill had died many years before.) Were you aware that Robert Clive – the man who helped to establish Britain as a key player in India – had been a feral youth who used to terrorise his neighbourhood?

You'll find these stories and more in our rundown. If you think there's anyone else who should have got a mention, drop us a line!

Mary Evans

EDWARD OF WOODSTOCK

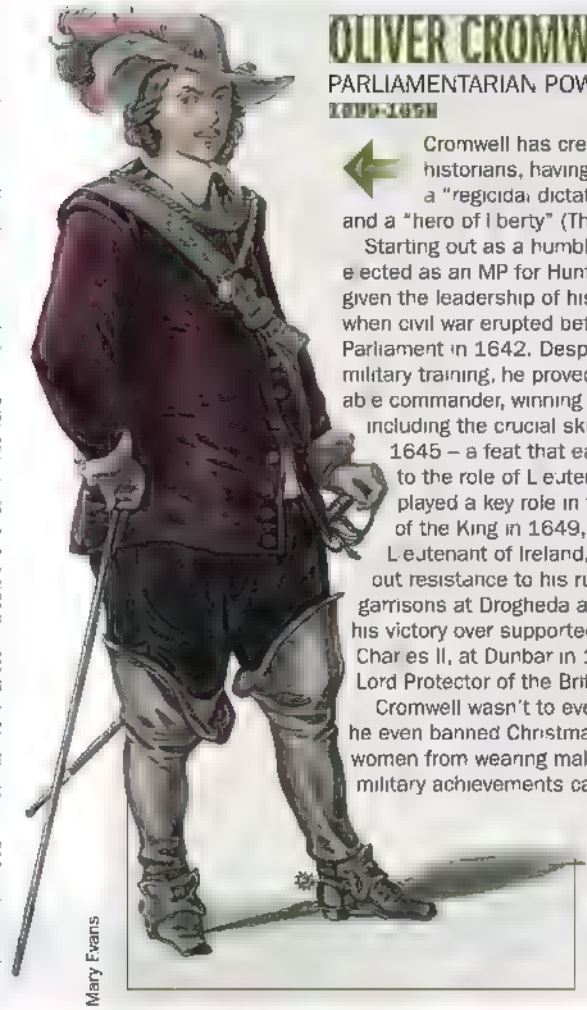
NEMESIS OF THE FRENCH

1330-1376

Also known as "the Black Prince", the son of King Edward III was a renowned commander during the Hundred Years War between the English and the French. Having already been made England's first Duke (of Cornwall) in 1337, nine years later – aged just 16 – he fought alongside his father in the English victory at the Battle of Crécy. In 1348, he became the first Knight of the Garter, having co-founded the Order, before he scored his greatest military achievement at the Battle of Poitiers in 1356. Here, during another victory for the English, he took King John II of France captive, resulting in Aquitaine becoming a part of English territory. Edward's repeated use of the *chevauchée* strategy (the burning and ransacking of towns and farms) did not follow notions of chivalry of the time, but it was effective in accomplishing the goals of his campaigns, and weakening the unity and economy of France. The Black Prince never got to be made King, as he died just before his father, after a long-lasting illness.

DID YOU KNOW?

The nickname "the Black Prince" was never used during Edward's lifetime – in fact, it didn't appear until almost 150 years later. It's thought to refer to the black armour he always wore into battle.



Mary Evans

OLIVER CROMWELL

PARLIAMENTARIAN POWERHOUSE

1599-1658

Cromwell has created a divide between historians, having been labelled both a "regicidal dictator" (David Hume) and a "hero of liberty" (Thomas Carlyle).

Starting out as a humble farmer, he was elected as an MP for Huntingdon in 1628 and given the leadership of his own cavalry troop when civil war erupted between Charles I and Parliament in 1642. Despite having had no military training, he proved to be a more than able commander, winning all of his battles, including the crucial skirmish at Naseby in 1645 – a feat that earned him a promotion to the role of Lieutenant General. He played a key role in the trial and execution of the King in 1649, before becoming Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, where he snuffed out resistance to his rule by massacring the garrisons at Drogheda and Wexford. Following his victory over supporters of the King's son, Charles II, at Dunbar in 1650, he made himself Lord Protector of the British Isles in 1653.

Cromwell wasn't to everyone's taste – he even banned Christmas celebrations and women from wearing make-up. But his military achievements cannot be disputed

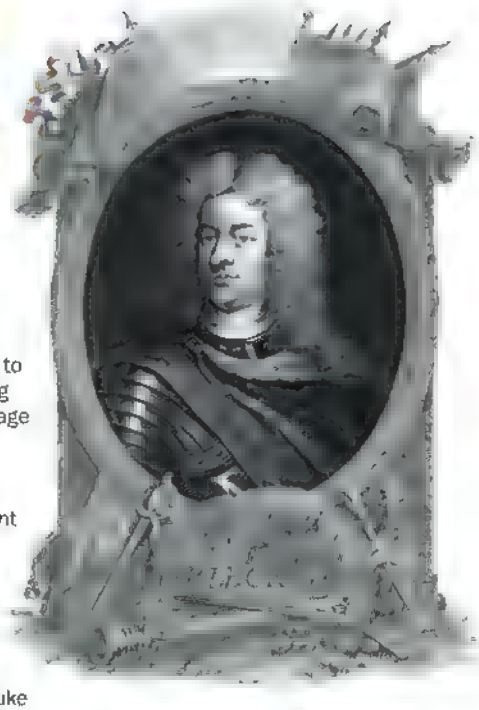
DID YOU KNOW?

Cromwell was originally buried in Westminster Abbey but after the Royalists returned to power in 1660, they had his corpse dug up, hanged and beheaded!

JOHN CHURCHILL

LOYAL TO THE ROYALS

1650-1722



Mary Evans

Sir Winston Churchill is often credited as being Britain's greatest ever wartime leader, but his ancestor's achievements as a military commander are arguably as impressive. Coming from an impoverished background, John Churchill became a page to James, Duke of York (later King James II), whereupon his courage and diplomatic skill earned him rapid military and political advancement. (This was no doubt helped by his subsequent marriage to Sarah Jennings, the best friend and lady-in-waiting to Princess Anne, later Queen Anne of England.)

A somewhat conflicted man, Churchill played a major role in crushing the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion against James II, despite being deeply opposed to the monarch's anti-Protestant stance (Churchill had been raised a Protestant). He later led British and Allied armies in ten campaigns against the French, scoring important victories over Louis XIV's army at Blenheim in 1704 and Oudenaarde in 1708

Many years later, the Duke of Wellington declared, "I can conceive of nothing greater than [Churchill] at the head of an English army," while Winston Churchill noted that "successive generations have not ceased to name him alongside Hannibal and Caesar".

DID YOU KNOW?

In 1705, Queen Anne and a grateful Parliament gave Churchill the royal manor at Woodstock with its 16,000 acres of land, on which he built Blenheim Palace.

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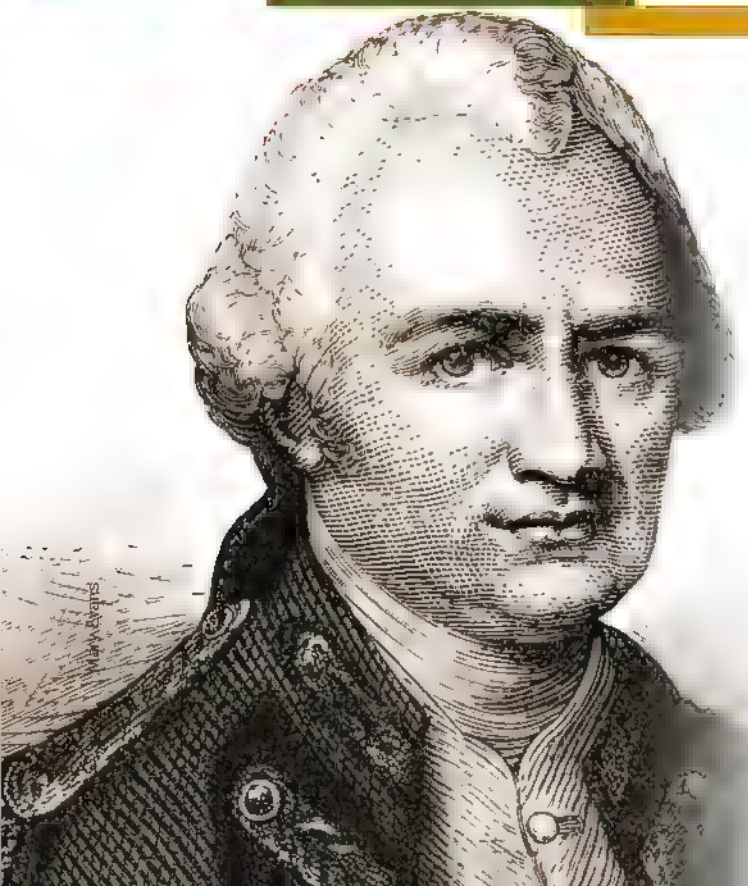


Mary Evans

ROBERT CLIVE

CONQUEROR IN INDIA

1725-1774

As a teenager, Clive terrorised his fellow townfolk, extorting money from shopkeepers and fighting – hardly the kind of person you'd expect to become one of Britain's greatest Generals. However, it was Clive who, via a series of decisive battles against the French and their tribal allies, established control of trade for the British in India, helping to lay the foundations for the economic power that would allow the British Empire to grow.

The young man's life changed when his father sent him to the subcontinent to quell his rebellious attitude. There, he joined the East India Company's private army and built a reputation for himself thanks to his courage and skill in battles against the French. In 1751, he was given the command of an expedition to seize the town of Arcot, which straddled a strategic trade route; and despite being vastly outnumbered, his army succeeded. "It may have been luck, it may have been bungling on the part of the enemy," said his biographer Mark Bence-Jones, "but it created the legend of English courage and invincibility, which was to carry English arms in India from one success to another."

DID YOU KNOW?

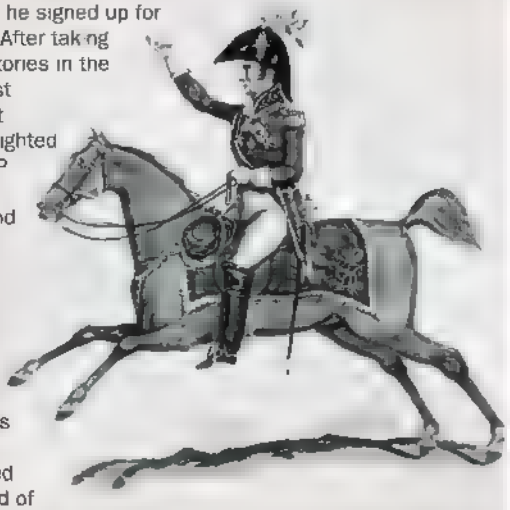
Clive, who died aged 49, is thought to have killed himself after a long illness, using a penknife to either stab himself or cut his own throat.

ARTHUR WELLESLEY

THE MAN WHO DEFEATED NAPOLEON

1769-1852

The name Arthur Wel es ey m ght not be fam iar to everyone, but his pseudonym – the Duke of Wellington – certainly w ll be. Born in Dub n in 1769, Wellesley was an unremarkable student at Eton, but found his true call ng in life when he signed up for the British forces. After tak ng part in famous v ctories in the Mysore War against T pu Sultan, and at Assaye, he was knighted and became an MP. Taking control of Brit sh, Spanish and Portuguese forces in the Pen nsular War (1808-1814), he forced the occupying French out of Spain and Portugal – a feat that earned him h s Duke of We ington title. Napo eon I fled into exile at the end of the war, but returned in 1815 for what became known as the Hundred Days of Napoleon. Wel es ey wasn't fazed, however, and commanded the army that, along w th the Prussians, defeated the Frenchman at Water oo. The Duke went on to serve as Brit sh Prime Minister twice. Wel es ey is famous for his defensive style and planning, which allowed h m to choose the battlefield and force the enemy to him. His tactics are still studied in m litary academies today.



Mary Evans

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2002, Wellesley was placed at number 15 in the BBC's poll of the 100 Greatest Britons.

HERBERT PLUMER

GREAT WAR "DADDY"

1857-1932

"Gentlemen, we may not make history tomorrow, but we shall certainly change the geography." So said Herbert P umer to his Second Army before the Batt e of Messines in June 1917. He wasn't wrong - the attack that followed began w th the loudest man-made sound ever heard up to that point, as 19 mines were exp oded at dawn on 7 June, killing 10,000 Germans and creating a noise so deafening that Prime M nister David Lloyd George reportedly heard it from his office in Downing Street!

It was just one of many successes for the General: after Messines, he sa vaged the disastrous Passchendae e campa gn that had been overseen by Hubert Gough; he was then sent to restore order to the Italian frontline following their calamity at Caporetto, before he conducted the defence against the German push of spring 1918. Nicknamed "Daddy Plumer" by his troops (his stout moustache certainly gave him an air of authority), the General d dn't enjoy quite as positive a relat onship w th Doug as Haig, who considered removing Plumer from his post on several occasions. That he didn't must go down as one of Haig's better ideas.

Mary Evans

DID YOU KNOW?

Plumer spent 18 months planning the massive explosion at Messines, with each mine weighing around 50,000 pounds.

1800 1825 1850 1875

1795 1800 1805 1810 1815 1820 1825 1830 1835 1840 1845 1850 1855 1860 1865 1870 1875 1880

Mary Evans

DOUGLAS HAIG

MASTERMIND OF THE HUNDRED DAYS OFFENSIVE

1861-1928

Haig is arguab y the most controversial addition to our l.st, due to the huge casualties brought about by his strategies. He replaced Sir John French as Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force in December 1915, by which point the war on the Western Front had reached a standstill. In an attempt to break this and rel eve the pressure on the French at Verdun, Haig ordered the Somme Offensive in July 1916. The action resulted in 60,000 British casualt es on the first day alone, with just under 20,000 men killed. This remains the highest casualty figure for one day in the history of the British Army, and led to Haig being g ven the nickname "the Butcher".

However, he went some way to redeeming myself by being a key figure in the Allies' Hundred Days Offens ve, which saw them push the German forces out of France and back beyond the Hindenburg Line - eventually leading to an armistice that would end the First World War. And in 1921, he set up the Haig Fund to raise money for ex-servicemen, a charity that became what we know today as the Poppy Appeal.

DID YOU KNOW?

Although his decisions led to huge losses at the Somme and, later, at Passchendaele, Haig was given a state funeral.

EDMUND ALLENBY

MASTER OF THE MIDDLE EAST

1861-1936

After being educated at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, Allenby went into service in South Africa, where he fought in the Second Boer War between 1899 and 1902. By the time the First World War erupted, he had risen through the ranks and was made commander of the British Expeditionary Force's Cavalry Division.

But his reputation stems from his spell as commander of the British Empire's Egyptian Expeditionary Force (EEF) – a position given to him after Prime Minister David Lloyd-George declared that he wanted a leader of "the dashing type". Allenby – who was nicknamed "Bloody Bull" on account of his determination and fiery temper – defeated Ottoman forces at the Third Battle of Gaza in October/November 1917, then captured Jerusalem that December, after which he disembarked from his horse and entered the city on foot out of respect to the Jewish people.

Following his military exploits, Allenby became a celebrity, particularly in the US. On a tour of America in 1928, he and his wife were met with a standing ovation when he addressed Carnegie Hall in New York City.

Mary Evans

DID YOU KNOW?

Allenby only embarked on a military career after twice failing to pass the examination for the Indian civil service, his first choice of occupation.

BERNARD MONTGOMERY

THE CELEBRITY GENERAL

1887-1976

Operation Overlord was one of the most significant actions of the Second World War. Starting with the iconic D-Day landings on the beaches of Normandy on 6 June 1944, it saw Allied forces march towards Paris, where they liberated the French capital from its German occupiers.

The overall commander of ground forces during that mission was Bernard Montgomery – or "Monty", as he was affectionately known. Monty was arguably the greatest and most well-known British General of the Second World War, and he was reportedly none too humble about it: according to some accounts, he was frequently reluctant to co-operate with other Generals, making him unpopular – particularly with the Americans. And when he was asked which three historical Generals he admired the most, he replied, "The other two would be Alexander the Great and Napoleon."

To be fair, though, his arrogance was probably justified: as well as the triumphant Overlord mission, he and his Eighth Army were victorious in the Second Battle of El Alamein, which marked a major turning point in the Second World War's Western Desert Campaign.

DID YOU KNOW?

Every year, a remembrance service is held at Monty's grave in Hampshire, with attendees including D-Day veterans and a bugler playing *The Last Post*.

1900 1925 1950 1975

1885 1890 1895 1900 1905 1910 1915 1920 1925 1930 1935 1940 1945 1950 1955 1960 1965 1970 1975

WILLIAM SLIM

THE MAN WHO DEFEATED THE JAPANESE – TWICE

1891-1970

Born into a humble household in Bristol, Slim went on to serve in both the First and Second World Wars, the latter of which saw him lead the 14th Army (otherwise known as "the forgotten army" – so-called because their exploits during the Burma Campaign were largely ignored by the British press). He was responsible for destroying two Japanese armies during the conflict – the first in India and the second in Burma – and historian Frank McLynn later paid tribute to him by stating that "Slim's encirclement of the Japanese on the Irrawaddy [River] deserves to rank with the greatest military achievements of all time".

Held in high regard by everybody who fought alongside him – he was known to his troops as "Uncle Bill" – Slim emphasised the need for more aggressive tactics in the field, which would undermine the enemy's will to win. He also made a point of sending his men on night training missions, to help them overcome their fear of the jungle and belief that the Japanese were better jungle fighters.

DID YOU KNOW?

Slim fought with the Anzacs at Gallipoli during the First World War, and was appointed Governor-General of Australia in 1952.

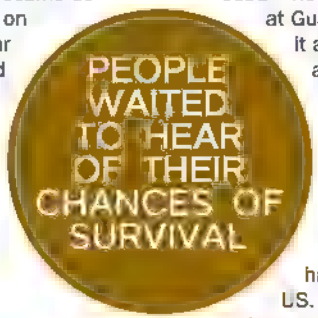
TRIGGER POINT

THE START OF THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

In the early 1960s, the world came perilously close to nuclear war, as the American and Soviet superpowers played a deadly chess match via Cuban leader Fidel Castro's volatile government. Chris Short investigates...

THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS WAS the most devastating conflict in world history, resulting in millions of deaths. The Caribbean island instantly became a wasteland and, by the end of the conflict, there was very little left of Washington DC or Moscow.

That didn't actually happen, of course, but for two weeks in October 1962, relations between the US and Soviet-backed Cuba became so bad that the world was genuinely on the brink of a catastrophic nuclear war. Regular radio reports advised people on how to survive a holocaust, while people waited with bated breath to hear of their chances of survival.



General William Y Smith, Special Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the crisis, stated, "This was the most frightening time the United States had ever been through. I didn't think any of us were going to survive." His fears were reflected in the views of ordinary citizens, with one in five Americans believing that a Third World War was about to break out. If that had happened, an estimated 100 million Americans and more than 100 million Russians would have been killed.

The build-up to the crisis stemmed from the Cuban Revolution, which, in 1959, saw the ferocious right-wing dictator Fulgencio Batista overthrown by Fidel Castro's guerrilla army. Initially, US President Dwight Eisenhower's administration welcomed the action, as Batista had long been an embarrassing ally of the America, and a friendly, democratic government in Cuba that promised to address urgent social reform would be far more stable and reliable. These views would soon change, however...

At the time, the US had vested interests in Cuba – not only did it occupy a naval base at Guantanamo (as it still does), but it also owned much of the island's agriculture and industry, and low-paid Cuban labour made it an attractive investment area.

To Fidel Castro, however, this presented a problem: he could never tackle his country's vital issues of poverty, ill health and illiteracy without harming the interests of the US. To Castro – and, indeed, to a large proportion of Cuba's population – American domination of the country was the cause of its problems, and it had to be ended.

As more and more anti-American reprimands came out of Castro's mouth ("North Americans don't understand... that our country is not just Cuba; our country is also humanity"), and as he started to look increasingly like a dictator (he failed to hold the free elections that he'd promised the Cuban people, and had many of his former political rivals put to death), so the ▶

Fidel Castro (second right) and his guerrilla army ousted the Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista in 1959

Getty Images

KEY FIGURES

JOHN F KENNEDY

As President of the United States – a position that he obtained at the onset of the Cuban crisis – Kennedy decided on a naval blockade of Cuba rather than a military attack following the devastating Bay of Pigs campaign. His ability to avert a nuclear war saw his public-approval rating increase from 66 per cent to 77 per cent.

FIDEL CASTRO

After pledging his affinity to communism and falling in line with the Soviet Union, the Cuban President instantly became an enemy of the US. Castro publicly declared his resentment towards American domination in his country, and agreed to have nuclear missiles installed on Cuba under Nikita Khrushchev's proposals.

NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV

Keen to remain on communist Cuba's right side, the Soviet leader organised for missiles to be sent to the island, but after two weeks of intense talks in the missile crisis, he agreed to withdraw them on the condition that America withdrew its missiles from Turkey, and promised not to invade Cuba.

ROBERT MCNAMARA

As the Secretary of Defence under President Kennedy, McNamara played a large role in the government's handling and eventual diffusion of the Cuban Missile Crisis. He supported the idea of the blockade option rather than an invasion of Cuba, and was able to convince the Joint Chiefs of Staff to fall in line.

RODION MALINOVSKY

The Soviet commander was a friend of Khrushchev yet maintained an independent position regarding military affairs. He supported the placement of strategic missiles but saw them as a deterrent of war, not as a weapon within it. The crisis therefore alienated him and he demanded that in-army publications be given a greater say in formulating Soviet strategic policy.

ROBERT KENNEDY

As his brother's confidant, Kennedy oversaw the CIA's anti-Castro activities after the Bay of Pigs incident. He also helped to develop the strategy to blockade Cuba instead of initiating a military strike. It's been reported that he authorised an assassination attempt on Castro. When the crisis was over, his brother as President claimed, "Thank God for Bobby."

OPPOSING FORCES

MISSILES

UNITED STATES

By 1962, the US had approximately 4,375 nuclear weapons deployed in Europe, with 60 Thor Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles (IRBMs) installed in the UK, 30 Jupiter IRBMs in Italy and 15 Jupiter IRBMs in Turkey. Each missile had a range of 1,500 miles, and the UK ones carried 1.44 megaton warheads, capable of unleashing a destructive force 100 times greater than that used on Hiroshima.

SOVIET UNION

In Cuba, the Soviets installed six R-7 Semyorka and 20 R-16 Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), as well as 24 R-12 and 16 R-14 missiles, which could reach most of the United States except for the far North West.

TROOPS

UNITED STATES

The US sponsored some 1,400 anti-Castro exiles to invade the island at the Bay of Pigs. Deployment of a larger army was unnecessary, as the crisis was averted before it got to that stage.

SOVIET UNION

A 44,000-strong contingent was moved into Cuba to protect the missiles and the island from a full-scale US invasion, while the Soviet Army was ready with 10,000 troops.

AIRCRAFT

UNITED STATES

America had a total of 109 fighter planes stationed in Jacksonville, Guantanamo and Key West. It also used a Lockheed U-2 spy plane to patrol over Cuba, which is when the Soviet missiles were located.

SOVIET UNION

The Soviet Air Force supplied 40 MIG-21 fighter jets, 36 helicopters and six Il-28 nuclear-capable bombers. The Soviet Navy supplied 36 nuclear-capable Il-28 mine and torpedo aircraft.

NAVY

UNITED STATES

The Atlantic Command contributed seven Ballistic Missile Submarines (SSBNs) with 112 warheads; the Pacific Command provided eight Regulus missiles, 16 Mace missiles and three aircraft-carriers; the European Command provided 105 Thor and Jupiter missiles, 48 Mace missile warheads and two Sixth Fleet aircraft-carriers.

SOVIET UNION

The Soviets boasted 12 R-183 speedboats, each carrying a pair of P-15 cruise missiles; two squadrons of cruise missiles with eight launchers each; and a Sopka coastguard squadron with six launchers. Their Navy personnel totalled 5,000 people.

US government decided that he needed to be dealt with. What made matters worse was that, in February 1960, the Cuban leader negotiated a trade agreement with the Soviet Union, allowing Cuba to import Soviet oil. Seeing this alliance as a serious threat to America's position, President Eisenhower labelled Castro a communist and ordered US refineries in Cuba not to process the oil. When Castro retaliated by nationalising the refineries, the US severed diplomatic relations. With a donation of $13.1million, Eisenhower tasked the CIA with ousting the leader, and attempts were made to assassinate him with the help of the Mafia.

Embarrassing blow

One of the steps taken by the CIA to remove Castro saw the organisation of a 1,400-strong army of anti-Castro Cuban exiles – Brigade 2506 – the idea being that they would invade Cuba with the backing of the US Air Force. It was hoped that the move would trigger mass uprisings by Cuban citizens that would overthrow Castro's government. However, Eisenhower hesitated in his actions and it was left to his successor, John F Kennedy – elected in January 1961 – to decide whether or not to launch the assault.

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER ORDERED THE CIA TO OVERTHROW CASTRO, AND ATTEMPTS WERE MADE TO ASSASSINATE HIM WITH THE HELP OF THE MAFIA

If Cuba thought that Kennedy was going to be less hostile to its revolution, it was much mistaken. The new President had used the Cuban crisis in his election campaign, accusing his Republican opponents of being too lenient on communism and insisting that Cuba was America's "most glaring failure". Kennedy became obsessed with the notion that Castro might be able to export his revolution to other Latin American nations, who would, in turn, revolt against the US. Defence Secretary Robert McNamara later admitted that the administration was almost hysterical over its fear of the Cuban leader

Kennedy decided to pursue the CIA's plan, which was put together hastily and desperately. Mass risings were expected purely on the basis of hope and wishful thinking. If these didn't occur, Brigade 2506 was expected to withdraw into Cuba and launch a guerrilla campaign. However, the chosen landing ground – the beaches at the so-called Bay of Pigs – was surrounded by swamps, meaning there was no possibility of this happening. Kennedy was also somewhat naive in assuming that it would be possible to launch the invasion without the world knowing of America's involvement – indeed, speculation was already gathering in the press at home. "Everyone in Miami knew about it," *The Herald*'s George Beebe told the Associated Press Media Editors. "I had a five-part series on my desk for two months, but I didn't want to be the first son of a bitch to release the story."

Anything that could have gone wrong did go wrong, and the Bay of Pigs invasion ended in disaster. Air attacks failed to destroy Castro's air force completely, and much of Brigade 2506's ammunition and communications equipment was wrecked by rocket attacks on its landing ships. Castro's forces fought a hard fight and enjoyed huge support from the Cuban people, which meant that no uprisings occurred. Within two days, over a hundred of the invaders had been killed and nearly 1,200 had surrendered

The failure at the Bay of Pigs was an embarrassing blow to Kennedy, who faced international ridicule. He later admitted, "Five minutes after it began to fall in, we all looked at each other and asked, 'How could we have been so stupid?'" However, he later placed some of the blame on the press for leaking information about the invasion. In a meeting with the American Newspaper Publishers Association's Bureau of Advertising, he told them, "I'm asking the members of the newspaper profession... to re-examine their own responsibilities, to consider the degree and the nature of the present danger, and to heed the duty of self restraint that that danger imposes upon us all."

The Bay of Pigs calamity only made the US government more determined to overthrow Castro – especially after Che Guevara, who had helped train the Cuban defence forces, sent a note to Kennedy saying, "Thanks for [the Bay of Pigs]. Before the invasion, the revolution was weak. Now it's stronger than ever." And it wasn't long before the President ordered the CIA to undertake Operation Mongoose, which would involve sabotage raids and the bribing of foreign suppliers to send faulty goods to Cuba. (Among the more outrageous plans was a scheme to spray a TV studio in which Castro was about to appear with an hallucinogenic drug.)

Provocative actions

In October 1962, a military exercise – Phibrig ex 62 - was undertaken by US forces in the Caribbean, in which 40,000 personnel practised invading an unnamed island to overthrow a dictator named "Ortsac" – probably the least

1959 1960 TIMELINE 1961

1959

Fidel Castro assumes power of Cuba after a revolution by his guerrilla army overthrows President Fulgencio Batista.

1960

Castro negotiates a trade agreement with the Soviet Union that allows Cuba to import Soviet oil. When President Eisenhower orders his refineries to refuse to process the oil, Castro nationalises them.

DECEMBER

Cuba openly aligns itself with the Soviet Union and its policies.

1961

The US terminates all diplomatic and consular relations with Cuba.

Backed by the US, an army of around 1,400 Cuban exiles invades Cuba at the Bay of Pigs in an attempt to trigger an anti-Castro rebellion. It ends in disaster, with many of the men being killed.

ambiguous anagram they could have concocted. Kennedy was intending to worry Castro, and he succeeded – but the President got more than he bargained for, as Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev also became concerned.

The Soviet Union had welcomed the Cuban revolution with open arms. Cuba was becoming increasingly dependent upon Moscow for military and economic aid and, in the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs, Castro had declared his commitment to communism for the first time. So when news filtered through to Moscow that Kennedy was preparing another, larger invasion of Cuba, the Soviets feared that it would compromise their own position. "If we had lost Cuba," Khrushchev later concluded, "our prestige in Latin American countries would have diminished. And how would everybody have looked at us afterwards?"

Khrushchev looked to the US for inspiration for his next move. In 1962, American Jupiter missiles were stationed in Turkey, within alarmingly close range of Soviet targets. This concerned the leader, who wrote to Kennedy and said, "You have placed destructive missiles, which you call offensive, in Turkey, literally next to us." To place the Soviets on an even keel strategically, Khrushchev made the decision to secretly station around 80 Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles (IRBMs) and Medium Range Ballistic Missiles (MRBMs) in Cuba, where they could threaten most of the US. "I came to the conclusion that even if the Americans found out about them, they would think twice before trying to liquidate Castro," Khrushchev later stated. "The United States was no longer at an unreachable distance from the Soviet Union."

By August 1962, the first rumours of Soviet missiles in Cuba began to make an appearance in the American press. Soviet diplomats, unaware of the project, issued denials from the outset, which made the sense of shock even more real when the missiles were discovered by a U-2 spy plane on 14 October 1962. To say that Kennedy was surprised by the discovery is an understatement. He felt that Khrushchev's actions were provocative to the US, but the Soviet leader claimed that he never even considered that the presence of missiles in Cuba would constitute such a large threat to America, as he was just acting in his own country's protective interests, and in response to the US' missiles stationed in Turkey. Nor had he realised that Kennedy and his government would not tolerate the damaging blow to their prestige that would result if the weapons were allowed to remain. Their presence would give the impression of a weakened America, and in the Cold War appearances were vital. For his part, Kennedy paid little regard to Khrushchev's motives and instead went straight to a solution: the missiles had to be removed.

Initially, he favoured air strikes and another invasion of Cuba, but the Bay of Pigs disaster had taught him the dangers of acting irrationally. Within two days, he formed a special advisory group – known as the Executive Committee of the National Security Council – to weigh up the various options. They met almost continuously for 13 days to hash out the best way to avoid nuclear disaster.

Unprovoked attack

The dangers of using force soon became clear: an unprovoked attack involving air strikes, followed by another, larger scale invasion, would be hard to justify, and Castro's forces would also resist, which could potentially end in an unwanted, problematic guerrilla war. During the talks over which decision to make, Robert Kennedy passed a note to his brother that said, "I now know how Tojo felt when he was planning Pearl Harbor."

There was an alternative to invasion, though. A naval blockade of Cuba was preferred by Kennedy, as it would be seen as less of a war-like act. It would, however, violate international law, and while it would prevent new weapons arriving on Cuba's shores, it might do little to remove those already on the island. It was a limited, measured response that would avoid forcing Khrushchev into a corner, where he would have to fight to avoid complete humiliation. If it failed, the military option was still there as a last resort.

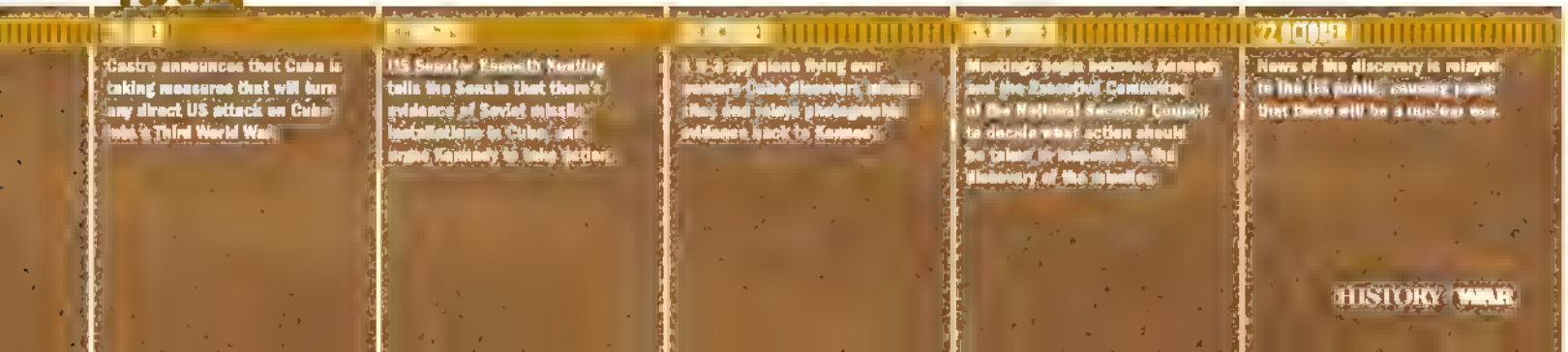
It was only on 22 October, when the blockade was prepared, that news of the missiles and of America's response was made public. It caused huge shock among US citizens and resonated throughout the world as forces went on high alert. The Third World War seemed imminent as nations around the globe prepared for the ultimate disaster: armageddon.

As we now know, nuclear war and World War Three never happened, and millions of lives were spared, with people of all nationalities breathing a huge sigh of relief at the closure of the idea of a new global conflict. Kennedy himself admitted, "It's insane that two men, sitting on opposite sides of the world, should be able to decide to bring an end to civilisation."

Despite his early failures and overreactions, President Kennedy had been successful in managing perilous relations between America and the Soviet Union, and the two countries eventually compromised as Nikita Khrushchev agreed to remove Russian missiles from Cuba in exchange for a promise from the United States that it would respect Cuba's territorial sovereignty, as well as remove its own missiles from Turkey. However, for two worrying weeks in October 1962, the world came perilously close to annihilating itself, and it hasn't come so close since. Lessons were to be learned, with National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy advising, "Having come so close to the edge, we must make it our business not to pass this way again."

In Cuba, October 1962

Rex features


1962
Castro announces that Cuba is taking measures that will turn any direct US attack on Cuba into a Third World War.
US Senator Kenneth Keating tells the Senate that there's evidence of Soviet missile installations in Cuba, and urges Kennedy to take action.
A U-2 spy plane flying over western Cuba discovers missile sites and relays photographic evidence back to Kennedy.
Meetings begin between Kennedy and the Executive Committee of the National Security Council to decide what action should be taken in response to the discovery of the missiles.
22 OCTOBER
News of the discovery is relayed to the US public, causing panic that there will be a nuclear war.
HISTORY WAR

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Anthem FROM THE MAKERS OF *HISTORY OF WAR* MAGAZINE

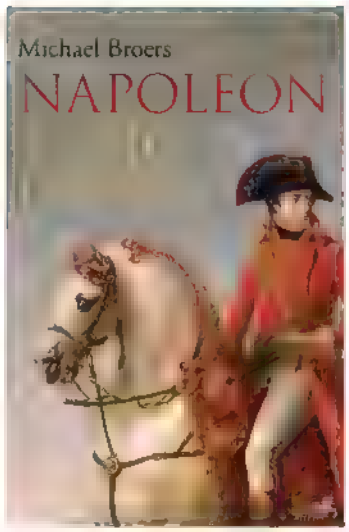
REVIEWS

History Of War casts its eye over the military-based **books, DVDs and games** that may or may not convince you to part with your cash this month

NAPOLEON: SOLDIER OF DESTINY

Michael Broers *Faber & Faber* **RRP £30**

★★★★★



There's a certain irony in the fact that one of history's greatest ever military commanders, Napoleon Bonaparte, is probably best known for a battle that he lost. That fateful engagement against the armies of the Seventh Coalition at Waterloo will be the subject of 200th-anniversary celebrations next year, but Oxford University Professor Michael Broers has chosen to get in there early with this hefty biography - the first of two - which looks back at the first 36 years of the French Emperor's life.

Napoleon's formulative years were influenced by the idealistic thrust of the French Revolution. As his military career blossomed, he not only exuded ambition but sought and rewarded it in others – assuming it met with his objectives. As one might expect of a man who installed himself as a nation's Emperor, he was a mesmerising figure who entranced and engaged the populous. His fundamental changes to the fabric of a nation are largely still in existence today. He formed the Legion of Honour, founded schools, introduced a new Civil Code, abolished the automatic right of the first born to inherit or succeed, whilst also reforming France's inheritance laws. His mission, like Stalin and Hitler who followed, was to restore pride and empower a nation in want of a strong leader. That, in turn, authorised his personal missions.

Whilst he appeared to uphold the virtues of the Revolution at home, he sought to bolster territorial ambition with domineering displays of militaristic might elsewhere. As a man in the numbers game, he was acutely aware that dominance brought leverage. He sought to expand his Empire to counter (and, to some extent, emulate) the power brokers of Britain, Russia and Austria.

Throughout his life, Napoleon was assiduous in his planning and execution, showing an early foresight in understanding the power of propaganda. He was not averse to sacrificing the lives of thousands to achieve his ends but, as with the dictators who followed him, he ensured his own demise when he finally stopped believing in his own invincibility.

One of the things that set Broers' book apart from others on the subject is that it draws upon Napoleon's actual correspondence rather than the sanitised and romanticised versions that have previously been used to glorify his persona. These uncensored words and unfettered access to the Emperor's thoughts enable the author to assess and detail Napoleon's life without giving way to sentiment or mysticism.

As one might expect of a book written by an Oxford Professor, *Napoleon: Soldier Of Destiny* provides a thoroughly researched, engaging and scholarly body of work. It would be foolish to think, however, that this academic origin would lend the style to be overtly studious or academic, as the author clearly engages with this period and writes with passion on the matter. Broers' style, pace and unclouded insight ensure that this book is a captivating read. This and the forthcoming sequel will undoubtedly become the oracles of the Napoleonic era for many years to come. **Mark Sinclair**

As one might expect of a book written by an Oxford Professor, this is a well researched and engaging body of work

THE KNIGHT WHO SAVED ENGLAND

Richard Brooks *Osprey* **RRP £12.99**

★★★★★

Many people have a decent grasp of English monarchy and national heritage, but are any of you familiar with Sir William Marshal? Probably not – though Richard Brooks eloquently argues his place as one of the most important characters in English history.

Born into a noble but obscure family in 1147, Marshal trained as a knight in France but found his true calling on the tournament circuit, where his exploits were legendary. He went on to become the advisor for the English monarchy, assisting Henry II, Richard I, John and Henry III.

In his seventies, he helped stave off a French invasion, leading the attack at Lincoln that broke the siege of the castle and scattered Prince Louis' forces. But it was his character that saved the nation: the Barons of England rallied to this respected and trusted knight, and his settlement with the French ensured a lasting peace.

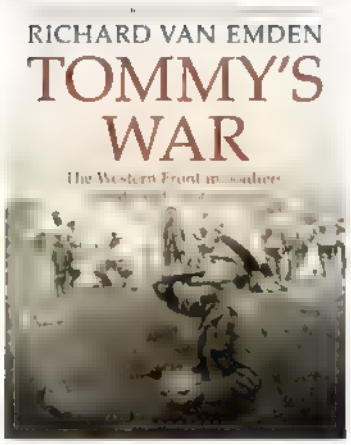
Brooks' 300-page, meticulously researched biography is a fascinating read, providing rich context to the proceedings and explaining the complexities of feudal Britain, which was dominated by baronial disputes, fractured monarchies and wars both national and civil. His narrative is clear and concise, and it zips along at the pace of a novel.

The Knight Who Saved England also happens to be a great story: the tale of a penniless younger son whose skill in combat and sterling personality saw him rise through the ranks to not only become the *de facto* ruler of the country, but also its saviour. **Steve Jarratt**

TOMMY'S WAR

Richard van Emden *Bloomsbury* **RRP £25**

★★★★



Richard van Emden has spent his career unearthing the stories of ordinary folk who fought during the First World War, and is perhaps best known for his work with Britain's last surviving soldier from the trenches, Harry Patch, which culminated in the 2008 book *The Last Fighting Tommy*.

With no living subjects from the conflict left, van Emden has turned to secondary sources for his latest book, *Tommy's War*, in which he continues his quest to ensure that the stories of those heroic men are not left behind by the grand sweep of history.

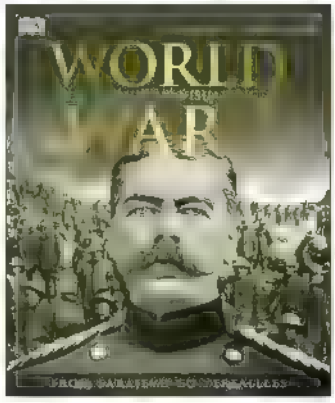
Too often, when the Great War is recalled, it's the master narrative that's related. Even today, most of us are familiar with the names of the catastrophic battles, the anguish of leaders such as Douglas Haig and Winston Churchill, the fact that King George dropped his German-sounding surname and even David Lloyd George's controversial legacy. But how much do we grasp of how it was for those men in the sepia footage – the ones who fought for their lives, knee-deep in mud, infested with lice and terrorised by whizz bangs and poison gas?

In this impressive work, van Emden has harvested countless letters and diary entries, as well as 250-plus personal photos from the era, most of which should never have been taken in the first place. After pictures of the famous 1914 Christmas Day truce wound up on the front of the *Daily Mirror*, military authorities banned private cameras from the front. Thankfully, this order wasn't heeded and the pictures help to make this intriguing book a touching, occasionally humorous addition to our understanding of the conflict. **Nick Soldinger**

WORLD WAR I: THE DEFINITIVE VISUAL GUIDE

RG Grant *Dorling Kindersley* **RRP £25**

★★★



You don't need me to tell you that there's going to be an awful lot of books about the First World War coming out over the next few months, as book publishers look to cash in on the centenary of the start of the conflict. Sadly, unless you've just come into a lot of money, it's unlikely you'll be able to afford them all.

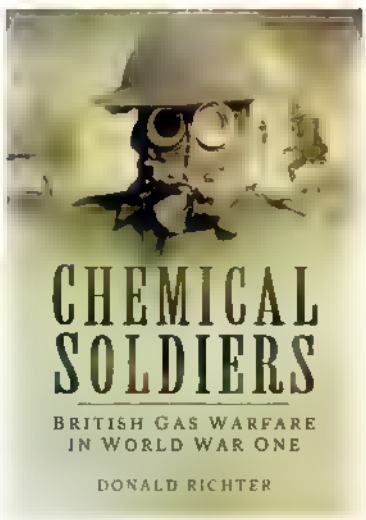
Under such circumstances, you might be tempted to buy a book that contains the whole story within one hearty volume – and that's pretty much what Dorling Kindersley's latest offering, *World War I: The Definitive Visual Guide*, claims to provide. The trouble is, by making the book a "visual guide" – ie nice to look at, with plenty of photographs, maps and graphics – they've sacrificed in-depth description and analysis of this world-changing conflict.

Make no mistake, it's candy for the eyes and provides a lighthearted read that you can pick up whenever you have five minutes to spare. A plethora of battles – "from Sarajevo to Versailles" – interesting and important characters, and key weapons are divided up into handy bite-sized sections, interspersed with the occasional genuinely gobsmacking photograph and depictions of wartime posters and curios. Which is all well and good for children and/or people with a passing interest in the subject. But if you fit into the "serious historian" category, it's unlikely this book will offer you much you don't already know. Don't get me wrong, that doesn't make it a bad buy – it's very well put together and would make a useful coffee-table addition that you can turn to for quick reference – but calling it "a definitive visual guide" may be exaggerating a bit. **James Jacobs**

CHEMICAL SOLDIERS

Donald Richter *Pen & Sword* **RRP £14.99**

★★★★



The British Special Brigade (BSB) come under analysis in this fascinating book from historian/author Donald Richter. Unofficially known as "the comical chemical Corporals", the BSB were a special unit sent to retaliate against the Germans' use of chemicals during the First World War. In *Chemical Soldiers*, Richter lifts the lid on some of the more far-fetched stories and mythologised accounts of this unit's work, with the help of official military records and personal, first-hand accounts such as diaries and letters.

It's a compelling read. With impressive detail, the author covers the problems faced by the Brigade at the Battles of the Somme and Loos, providing an insight into their thought processes under immense pressure; and he also homes in on the unit's tenacious leader, Charles Foulkes, who, remarkably, had been part of the British field-hockey team that won Bronze at the 1908 Olympics.

We discover that the use of chemicals was at first considered "unsporting" by the British, and that the Government's investment in the development of chemical warfare was merely a means of countering the Germans' increasing use of it (the phrase "paying the Hun back in his own coin" was a common phrase at the time).

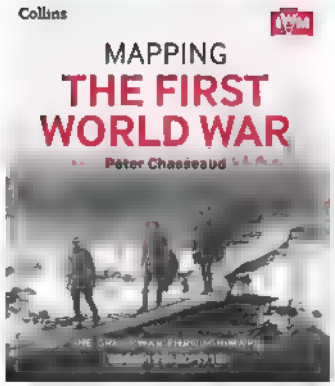
Ultimately, Richter surmises that the general military application of chemical warfare during the First World War was unreliable and wholly ineffective, except in the most unusual circumstances.

An exhaustive and obviously painstakingly researched piece of work, *Chemical Soldiers* is essential reading for the centenary. **Andy Price**

MAPPING THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Peter Chasseaud *Collins* **RRP £30**

★★★



This glossy hardback promises "over 150 maps, demonstrating how the Great War was fought around the world", before the blurb goes on to explain that the contents will include the Battles of the Marne and Ypres; the Gallipoli Campaign; Tannenberg and the Eastern Front; Verdun and the Somme; Damascus and Baghdad; Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele; the Battle of Jutland and many more.

Call me a stick in the mud but, for me, military maps are invariably disappointing: sometimes they can be enlightening, but more often than not they don't come with a key – or the key is simply too small to read – and you end up none the wiser as to what went on in that particular battle.

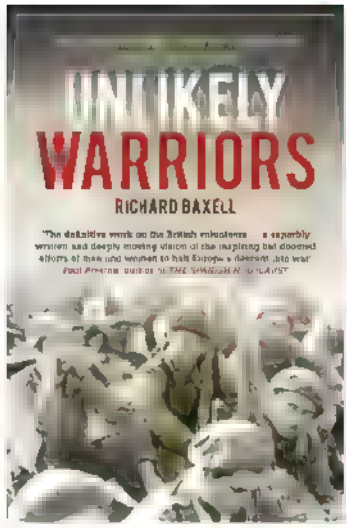
And so it is with Peter Chasseaud's book. For genuine map buffs, there's a certain degree of interest in that the maps are vintage and, for the most part, beautifully presented (how they manage to make these things look like they were printed yesterday is beyond me). They represent both sides in the conflict, and many of them would once, of course, have been top secret. It's just that, at times, it's almost impossible to work out what's what, so you might as well be looking at a simple road map. Which is a shame because Chasseaud – who talks us through the book – clearly knows his stuff, and I was left feeling that more space could have been allocated to what he had to say.

Some of the maps herein are undoubtedly fascinating and provide a rare insight into the minds of military strategists, upon whom the lives of millions of men depended. But that only serves to highlight how the lesser examples should have been left on the proverbial cutting-room floor. **Ian Park**

UNLIKELY WARRIORS

Richard Baxell *Aurum Press* **RRP £12.99**

★★★★



There are many good books on the Spanish Civil War – Antony Beevor's *The Battle For Spain* springs to mind, while George Orwell's *Homage To Catalonia* is, of course, essential. *Unlikely Warriors* focuses specifically on the role of British volunteers in the conflict, and sheds more light on this particular aspect of the war than any other.

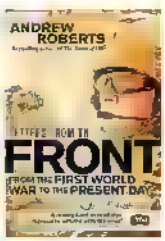
Over 32,000 people from more than 35 countries volunteered to fight for the Republicans in Spain between 1936 and 1939. *Unlikely Warriors* tells the story of the 2,500 men and women who left the gloom of Depression-era Britain for the romance and excitement of taking on Franco in what, after the bombing of the open city of Guernica in 1937, looked like a straightforward showdown between good and evil. It was to cost at least 500 of them their lives, and almost all of them their idealism, as political infighting as witnessed and documented so expertly by Orwell poisoned the anti-Fascist crusade from within.

Even without this, the people who came to fight were throwing themselves into the furnace. Backed by Hitler, Franco's forces were better equipped, better prepared and more ruthless than their opponents. By contrast, few of the volunteers had military experience, training was poor and the command structure was blighted by political squabbling. Baxell's book is uncompromising in highlighting these shortcomings, and the horrific injuries and deaths that resulted from them. Benefiting from an impressive range of research, this is an extraordinary story of heroism, tragedy and sacrifice. **Nick Soldinger**

LETTERS FROM THE FRONT

Andrew Roberts *Osprey* **RRP £8.99**

★★★★★



Letters from soldiers on the battlefield to their loved ones back at home are the very epitome of poignancy. In this book, British historian Andrew Roberts has managed to compile an incredible collection of correspondence from servicemen over the last hundred years, including those fighting in the First and Second World Wars, and some in more modern conflicts.

What resonates the most about the book is how the writers of the letters seek to re-establish a connection with the lives they once knew – a small morsel of solace to take their minds off their dire situations. This is made even more haunting and harrowing by Roberts' inclusion of the soldiers' fate after the mail was sent, with many of them having been killed just days after sending the letter.

While at times you can't help feeling guilty for reading what were once incredibly personal artefacts, you owe it to these heroic soldiers to hear their stories. **Chris Short**

WHAT TOMMY TOOK TO WAR: 1914-1918

Peter Doyle & Chris Foster *Shire Publications* **RRP £6.99**

★★★★

The title and cover image pretty much sum up what you get with this little book: a pictorial account of the trappings of a British soldier in the First World War. After a brief introduction to "Tommy Atkins" and the theatres of war, the book follows the pattern of a nicely photographed item facing a one-page description.

The book covers the usual items of kit – clothing, insignia, weapons – but there are more poignant mementos, too: good-luck charms, casualty letters and the strip of golden braid that signified its owner had been wounded (a suggestion made by Arthur Conan Doyle, so that experienced soldiers were more easily recognised).

It's a slight tome but is a welcome change from the more academic books on the conflict, and would make a nice gift for a youngster as a gentler introduction to the Great War. **Steve Jarratt**

MEMOIRS OF A RIFLEMAN SCOUT

Major F M Crum *Frontline* **RRP £25**

★★★★

This memoir from trench-sniper Major FM Crum looks back at his career, from fighting in the Second Boer War, through founding the 7th Troop of Boy Scouts in Scotland, to re-joining the Rifle Corps and serving in France during the First World War.

The book sheds light on the development of sniping during the 1914-1918 conflict, as well as on the dedication and skill of the men who overcame German superiority in this field. The section in which Crum recounts his involvement in the formation of the Boy Scouts is interesting, and reveals much about the moral and philosophical motivations behind it.

Compiled from Crum's diaries, as well as letters to family and friends, this book is a crucial read for those who are interested in the history and advancement of sniping during the First World War, and also features a forward from sniping expert Adrian Gilbert. **Andy Price**

THE FATEFUL BATTLE LINE

Michael Glover *Pen & Sword* **RRP £12.99**

★★★★

It's not often that we get to bear witness to drawings and paintings from the front line of war – let's face it, how many people are brave enough to endure the hardships of battle and then capture the moment in a piece of art?

Well, it would seem that Captain Henry Ogle was. A keen painter from an early age, Ogle enlisted with the British Army just a month after the First World War broke out, and proceeded to document many of his experiences through sketches taking in everything from buildings ravaged by shells, to troops relaxing or firing on the enemy. This book is full of said artworks, but also contains Ogle's diary extracts, where he details his war experience and provides contextual explanations for each of his creations.

All in all, *The Fateful Battle Line* is a very interesting book that gives us a view of the war-torn fields and towns of Europe from a very different perspective. **Chris Short**

BONZO'S WAR

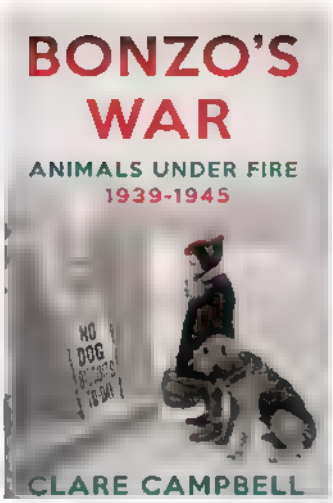
Clare Campbell *Constable* **RRP £7.99**

★★★★

The inherent lure of *Bonzo's War: Animals Under Fire* is also its principal "problem". If you pick up a copy, the chances are you will have done so because you're an animal lover and liked the look of the cute dog that graces the cover image. Which also means you're likely to be repulsed by some of the stories within.

Campbell writes about the (largely) torrid trials of animals throughout the Second World War. And, mark my words, the jaunty lyricism of her writing style is needed to counteract the horror you'll experience at some of the contents. While the book isn't exclusively a festival of shock and misery, it does detail the agonising end that many domestic pets, zoo animals and farm creatures suffered in that period.

It's astonishing to learn that domestic animals' greatest foe wasn't a Nazi jackboot or a V8 bomber (surprisingly, they grew largely blasé to the explosions brought about by enemy planes) – it was the pre-war hysteria brought about by the Government's bureaucrats, who advised the



population to have their pets put down to spare them the horror of the conflict. (In actual fact, the politicians' fear that packs of mustard-gas-ridden wild beasts would roam the streets of our cities initiated said panicked guidance.) Sadly, many owners complied and in one week alone, 750,000 pets met a brutally early end in the "national interest".

Bonzo's War is a fascinating and compelling read with a myriad of insightful stories that will make you weep at times and sing for joy at others – especially if, like me, you have pets of your own. **Mark Sinclair**

A GERMAN TOMMY

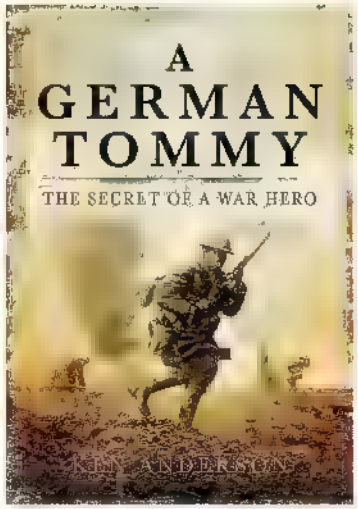
Ken Anderson *Pen & Sword* **RRP £19.99**

★★★★

When this book landed on my desk, I was immediately intrigued by the title. How could a German possibly be a Tommy? And what exactly was this war hero's secret? I decided to read on and find out.

Ken Anderson narrates the story of German-born Walter Schwarz, who began his military career with service in the Australian Army but deserted after the start of the First World War. Just two days later, Schwarz signed up with the British Army, changing his name to the more English-sounding Walter Merritt after being taunted by his comrades. The book focuses on Merritt's efforts to conceal his true identity from his superiors in the battefield, and explains how the Freemasons helped him to keep his secret and even assisted with his enlistment in the Army. His identity was only revealed after the war when he admitted to King George who he really was, and requested a pardon for his desertion from the Australian Army.

Anderson's book is a consistently fascinating read that keeps you on tenterhooks as to how the story will develop. Throughout, he provides



incredibly detailed accounts, not just of the combat arena but also of Merritt's trials as he goes about avoiding suspicion and achieving his objectives to become a war hero – even if it was by deception. Merritt's life is placed in the context of the First World War, allowing the reader to follow his every step and absorb his emotions. His story is the first of its kind (that we know of), and in this, the centenary of the start of the First World War, there has never been a better time to discover it. **Chris Short**

THE BACKWASH OF WAR

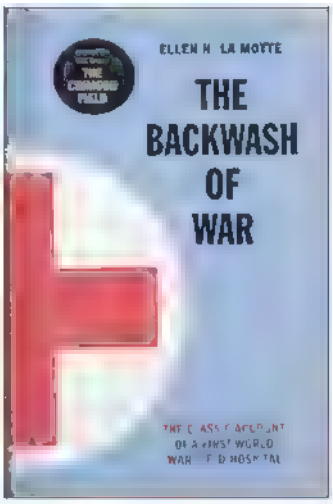
Ellen N La Motte *Conway* **RRP £8.99**

★★★★

There are many books dedicated to the bravery of the men who fought on the frontline during the Great War – and rightly so. Less frequently documented are the experiences of women during the conflict, which, as Kate Adie discusses elsewhere in this issue, were every bit as important and every bit as challenging – as those of their male counterparts.

Back in 1916, Baltimore-born Ellen N La Motte – one of the first American women to volunteer to travel to Europe and treat injured soldiers fighting in the war – published her uncensored account of life in a military hospital. Consisting of 14 uncompromising vignettes detailing the horror of the troops' injuries and the ordeal of the medical staff tasked with treating them, *The Backwash Of War* was frowned upon by the American public, banned by the US Government in 1918 and not republished until 1934.

You could argue that the outcry surrounding the publication was a backhanded compliment to La Motte's work. After all, if it wasn't a visceral read, nobody would have



batted an eyelid. And I'm pleased to say that, published again nearly a hundred years on, the book has lost none of its poignancy nor ability to shock. Her descriptions of lice- and disease-ridden wounded soldiers still make one gag, while the horror of what weapons of war can do to a human body is no less potent than it was back in 1916.

Whether you're interested in military history or just fancy reading something that will make you think, *The Backwash Of War* is well worth a look. But be warned: it may not be suitable for those with a sensitive disposition. **James Hollins**

THE SCAPEGOAT

Steve R Dunn *Book Guild* **RRP £17.99**

★★★★

Long before the Falklands conflict of the 1980s, British forces engaged with the Germans in the seas around the islands as part of the First World War. The man tasked with leading the British fleet into that engagement was Rear Admiral Sir Christopher Cradock, who had been badly advised and whose fleet was ill-equipped to ably take on the warships of Vice Admiral Graf von Spee. The resulting Battle of Coronel proved to be a disaster, with 1,660 men losing their lives as Cradock's ships HMS Good Hope and HMS Monmouth were sunk – the worst British naval disaster for a hundred years.

The Scapegoat tells the tragic and, at times, infuriating story of that mission, focusing on how and why Cradock was sent into a battle that he never had a hope of winning. Steve Dunn apparently spent 20 years trying to uncover the truth about the fate of this forgotten war hero, and his book is peppered with unseen documents that help to unravel this century-old mystery. One of the survivors of the Coronel carnage was

seemingly adamant that Churchill and his pals in the British government were responsible for the calamity, writing in one of the documents, "However weighty Mr Churchill's pen, he cannot explain away the awful fact that a mistake was made by the authorities at home and not by Admiral Cradock."

It's up to you to make your mind up who was really at fault and why those mistakes were made – but Dunn helps no end by providing some compelling and well-researched evidence. **Paul Dimery**

WWI: THE FIRST MODERN WAR

Dir: N/A *History* **RRP £21.50**

★★

This six-disc collection from the History channel purports to be "the complete story of WWI". That the 13 documentaries within cover a wide range of topics is indisputable, but its claim to be complete is as hyperbolic as the language used to narrate the films is clichéd.

Made primarily for the US market, the programmes' subject matter – mass slaughter, the mechanisation of war, heroism and the futility of conflict – is somewhat undermined by the pop-video style in which they're delivered. Talking heads act like tour guides, delivering ten-second soundbites, while authentic footage flashes across the screen in a barrage of short clips – often tinted blue or red to make it more, erm, exciting.

The soundtrack is also faintly ludicrous. Heavy rock bangs away in the background to indicate the impending doom of battle. A film about letters home from the front gets the old sentimental, tinkling-piano treatment. And the sombre rat-a-tat of a solitary drum accompanies footage of US Doughboys marching off to save Europe from a nightmare of its own making – which seems to be a key message of the series.

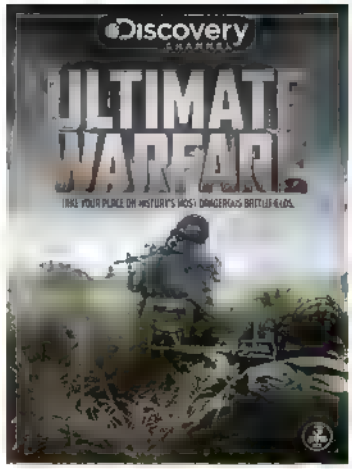
Not that this is completely an exercise in style over content. While the relentless pro-American perspective can grate at times, it occasionally adds insight – a good example being the film *Declassified WWI*, which examines Britain's increasingly devious campaign to draw the States into the conflict.

That said, this compilation is more of a broad introduction better suited to those new to the history of the war, rather than seasoned campaigners. **Nick Soldinger**

ULTIMATE WARFARE

Dir: N/A *Discovery Channel* **RRP £13**

★★★★



There's a morbid curiosity in all of us that makes us want to know what it was like to fight in some of the most famous, and fiercest, battles in history. And not just read about it, but actually be there, in the thick of the action with bullets flying overhead and the sound of tankfire in the distance.

This three-DVD set aims to satiate that urge by throwing us in at the deep end at the likes of Khe Sanh, Hué, Baghdad, Midway and Okinawa. It does this using a combination of awe-inspiring archive footage, state-of-the-art computer animation and battle re-enactments that are, for the most part, breathtaking. I say "for the most part" because, in his determination to make the action as realistic as possible, the director at times goes too heavy on the shaky hand-held camera. So when, for example, you're running through a field to engage the Viet Cong, it's sometimes difficult to actually follow what's going on. Equally frustrating is the film-maker's insistence on cutting away just as the action's getting good, in order to provide us with yet another talking head (which are interesting but visually boring).

But credit where it's due – it's obvious that an awful lot of effort and research has gone into making this, and it's about as close as you're going to get to experiencing those engagements without inventing a time machine and signing up for the army. Of course, it will never be truly immersive until they make a 3D version – or, better still, a 4D version – but if you're bored of pushing a pen at work and want to know what it's like to be a real-life soldier in a real-life combat situation, buy this. **Paul Dimery**

EMPEROR

Dir: Peter Webber *Universal* **RRP £8**

★★★★

Tommy Lee Jones has taken over from Lee Marvin as the go-to guy when it comes to casting someone to play an army General, and he turns in a convincing performance as the legendary Douglas MacArthur in this "inspired by true events" drama about a US investigation into Emperor Hironito's part in Japan's Second World War campaign. Matthew Fox is equally watchable as General Bonner Fellers – the man tasked with carrying out the investigation – who's torn between his military duties and his desire to find an exchange student who captured his heart before the war.

Directed by British-born Peter Webber (*Girl With A Pearl Earring*; *Hannibal Rising*), *Emperor* manages to avoid the slushy sentiment found in many war films with a romantic sub-plot (*Pearl Harbor*, anyone?), and instead manages to portray a sensitive subject with subtlety and, at times, poetic cinematography. **Andy Emerson**

1944: THE FINAL DEFENCE

Dir: Ake Lindman, Sakari Kirjavainen *Metrodome* **RRP £7**

★★

One of the lesser-known engagements of the Second World War is the Battle of Tali-Ihantala in 1944, where German-backed Finnish troops found themselves vastly outnumbered against an intimidating Soviet advance.

1944: The Final Defence tells the story of that fateful encounter, throwing you into the action from the very beginning, as Finnish soldiers pace across an open field trying to evade bombing from the Soviet troops. Sadly, after that, the pace stagnates until the last half an hour, when things pick up a bit but not enough to stop you feeling like you've been short-changed.

One of the most noticeable aspects of the film is the poor picture quality, which screams "low budget". On the plus side, a nice touch is the inclusion of real footage from the actual battle although this only happens twice.

1944: The Final Defence is repetitive, unfulfilling and not worth your money. **Chris Short**

FIX BAYONETS

Dir: Jeremy Freeston *Upfront* **RRP £12.50**

★★★★

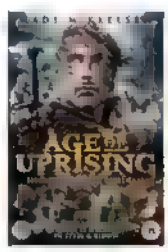
Goose Green, 28-29 May 1982: a place and a date that will live long in the memories of the men who fought against Argentine forces in the first major land battle of the Falklands War. This documentary focuses on two of those men, taking them back to the site for the first time since those fateful two days, three decades ago.

It's essentially a DVD version of a battleground visit, with Major Phil Neame and Corporal John Geddes pointing out various areas of the barren moorland and explaining the remarkable, and at times harrowing, events that occurred there. The film provides a fascinating insight into the mindset of men who were sent off to fight in a place they had no real connection with (Geddes explains that he thought the Falklands were "north of the Shetland Islands"), and is a must-see for anyone whose knowledge of the Falklands War is restricted to the coverage provided by the British tabloids. **Paul Dimery**

AGE OF UPRISING

Dir: Arnaud des Pallières *Chelsea Films* **RRP £7.99**

★



Based on a novella by German author Heinrich von Kleist and set in 16th-century France, *Age Of Uprising* tells the story of Michael Kohlhaas (Mads Mikkelsen), a well-to-do farm labourer living a simple life with his family until mistreatment by a local Baron inspires him to launch a revenge mission.

Judging from the cover, you'd think an epic battle is in store as the two forces collide. But there's no such thing. Instead, we get a slow, empty film that doesn't really go anywhere. Every character is vapid and void of emotion, and there's hardly any dialogue (which, I suppose, will please those who dislike subtitles). Indeed, the sound you'll become most accustomed to is that of horses' hooves, which feature in almost every scene.

Mikkelsen is undoubtedly a fantastic actor but his talents are wasted here, and the film is a squandered opportunity that could have been much better. **Chris Short**

GOING MEDIEVAL

Dir: N/A *History* **RRP £8**

★★★★

I'll start off by saying that, being claustrophobic, I wouldn't have fancied having to wear one of those helmets! But then, life was never easy in medieval times, as this two-hour presentation from the History channel attests.

Fronted by historian and weapons expert Mike Loades (best known for the BBC TV series *Time Commanders* and Channel 4's *Weapons That Made Britain*), *Going Medieval* takes us back to the Middle Ages – between the 5th and 15th Centuries – when knights rode around on horseback, soldiers wore chainmail and people in castles repelled attacking forces by throwing hot water (and other, more unpleasant liquids) over them.

Delving deep into the lifestyles of the men and women who inhabited these troubled times (and believe me, the Middle Ages weren't as glamorous as popular movies will have you believe), Loades never fails to engage the viewer. In one segment, he reveals that the best way to shine a knight's armour (in the unlikely event that you'll ever need that skill) is to use a combination of sand, vinegar and – wait for it – urine. And he takes us round the living quarters and battlegrounds of our ancestors with all the zest of an estate agent on his first day on the job.

Even if the Middle Ages aren't your favourite chapter of British history – and I'd have to say they aren't mine – *Going Medieval* is still an intriguing journey into one of the country's most challenging periods. If nothing else, it'll make you wonder how our forefathers ever managed.

Right, I'm off to shine my suit of armour. **Paul Dimery**

FATHER OF A SOLDIER/ TOMORROW WAS THE WAR

Dir: Rezo Chkheidze/Yuri Kara *Ruscico* **RRP £13/£14**

★★

These two Russian films look back at the Second World War from different moments in Soviet history. The first, *Father Of A Soldier*, was made in 1964 and depicts the odyssey of a Georgian farmer who travels to the frontline to seek his wounded son. His patriotism is sufficiently aroused on his arrival that he joins the fray as the Red Army pushes into Germany. Here, he eventually encounters his son besieged in a Reichstag-like building at the war's end. It's a sentimental, revisionist melodrama that portrays the Red Army of 1945 as a magnanimous, liberating force rather than the drunken, vengeful horde that committed in excess of a million rapes against females as young as eight, and as old as 80.

The second film, *Tomorrow Was The War* (pictured), was made at the end of the Soviet era in 1987, and is set in a small Russian town in 1940, the year before Operation Barbarossa brought the panzers, Stukas and death squads. It's a coming-of-age tale that centres around a schoolgirl who recites poems by a writer banned by Stalin, while overzealous adults berate her for indulging such bourgeois decadence. Her father is arrested as an enemy of the people, and the girl kills herself. The epilogue then explains how the war brought similar fates for her classmates.

Russia has made some fine war films over the years, but neither of those reviewed here comes close to the standard of, say, *9th Company* or *Come And See*. File under "curios". **Nick Soldinger**

THE SUBMARINES OF WORLD WAR II: THE SILENT SERVICE

Dir: N/A *History*
RRP £12.50

★★★★

Unwrapping this box set, my fear was that it was going to be a bit niche: surely only a naval anorak would need three discs – and six and a half hours – dedicated entirely to submarines? But one thing the History channel does well is tell a good story, and this collection of documentaries grabs your attention from the get-go. This is partly thanks to the amazing footage, which thrusts you into the action at Guadalcanal, Pearl Harbor and Iwo Jima, and especially on (and under) the high seas.

While the core subject matter is, of course, submarines, the programmes cover the topic from a variety of angles, so you learn about the men who captained the vessels, the strategies used to win battles, and the everyday lives of the crews, who spent large parts of the war beneath the waves.

Silent they may have been, but the story of these hidden killers is well worth hearing. **Paul Dimery**

WAR GAMES

Dir: Wolfgang Petersen *Fox* **RRP £7.50**

★★★★½

The mid-Eighties was undoubtedly a golden period for cinema, and this tense teen thriller – though largely forgotten – is up there with the best of them.

Matthew Broderick and Ally Sheedy star as the falling-in-love young couple who kind of accidentally-on-purpose hack into the top-secret computer system of the US military, and almost start a nuclear war between America and Russia. The hairstyles and, especially, the technology look dated nowadays, but the plot keeps you interested for the whole 108 minutes – unlike many of today's blockbusters, which start off with promise before descending into a monotonous CGI fest.

The film offers food for thought – principally about how precarious the world is with such weapons of mass destruction at the hands of the global superpowers. But more than that, *War Games* is an enjoyable drama-suspense that's aged somewhat better than those embryonic computers. **Paul Dimery**

STRATEGY & TACTICS: WWII

iPhone app *HeroCraft Ltd* **Free**

★★

Like most other strategy games on the market, *Strategy & Tactics: WWII* works on a "plan, manoeuvre and assault" formula. The game itself is visually intriguing, but the usability is problematic on the iPhone. You require a substantial amount of taps before anything happens – and as territories are so closely linked, you can often find yourself tapping where you hadn't planned to.

Additionally, it seems that the game-maker has stacked the odds in its favour. As you progress, your frustration duly increases as the "enemy" has far greater strategic freedoms than you have – unless you pay for greater access. Is that the real strategy here?

If you have the patience of a saint, you may find this attractive. Maybe with greater perseverance it becomes easier. However, with better games out there, it soon becomes a strategic question of "why bother?". **Mark Sinclair**

WORLD CONQUEROR 2

iPhone app *Easy Inc* **Free**

★★★★

There are those people who love strategy games and those who are bored to tears by them. If you hate them, you'll find this no less boring. You move your armies and munitions around, then hit a button and wait for a battle to commence while you go and make a coffee.

If you love them, however, this stylish – and free – game is captivating and dangerously addictive. You plot your military strategy to conquer Europe, region by region, using an interesting array of militaristic tools at your disposal.

This game is well designed, has a good soundtrack and feels good. Like most games of this genre, you need to commit to the game to progress. Alternatively, you can pay your way forward with various in-app purchases.

So, if you tire of strategy games, avoid this – but if you love them, *World Conqueror 2* is a unique and engaging gem. **Phil Henderson**

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WAR in NUMBERS

THE SECOND BOER WAR

The 1899-1902 clash between **Britain** and the **Boer settlers in South Africa**

7,894

▲ The number of British Empire troops killed in action during the conflict.

▼ The number of British Empire troops still missing.

934

65%

◀ Sixty-five per cent of British Empire soldiers died from disease, as opposed to 35 per cent in battle.

80%

▶ Eighty per cent of men presenting for service in the war were found to be unfit to fight.

25%

◀ One in four inmates of British civilian internment camps died, the majority being children.

▼ The number of Victoria Crosses awarded to British and colonial soldiers during the war.

78

£200 MILLION

▲ How much the war cost Britain – its most expensive conflict between 1815 and 1914.

2,000

◀ Two-thousand yards was the maximum range of the German Mauser 7mm, the gun that the African settlers were armed with.

3

▲ There were three phases to the conflict: the Boer offensive, the British response and a guerrilla war.

1

▲ One soldier was reportedly taken by a crocodile and eaten!

1

Only one person who fought in the war would go on to become British Prime Minister: Sir Winston Churchill.

86

▲ Up to 86 soldiers were killed or injured by lightning during the war, according to newly published records.

217

◀ The number of days the Siege of Mafeking lasted – the most famous British action in the war.

31

◀ The number of months that the war lasted.

▶ The number of civilian internment camps built for black Africans to keep them separated from whites.

64

28,000

▲ The approximate number of Boer troops captured during the war.

▼ The number of those troops who were sent overseas, mainly to prevent them from being freed by sympathetic locals.

25,630

Mary Evans

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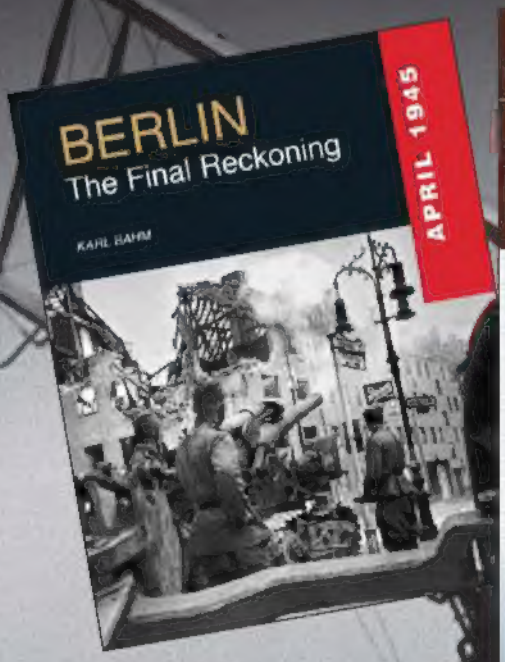

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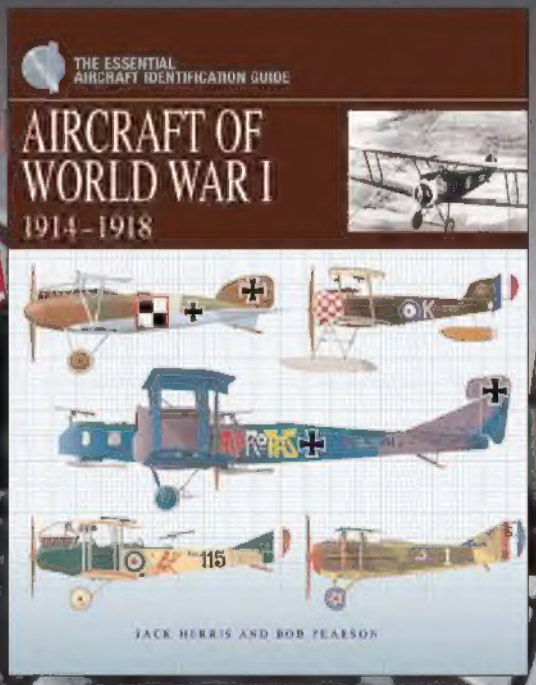

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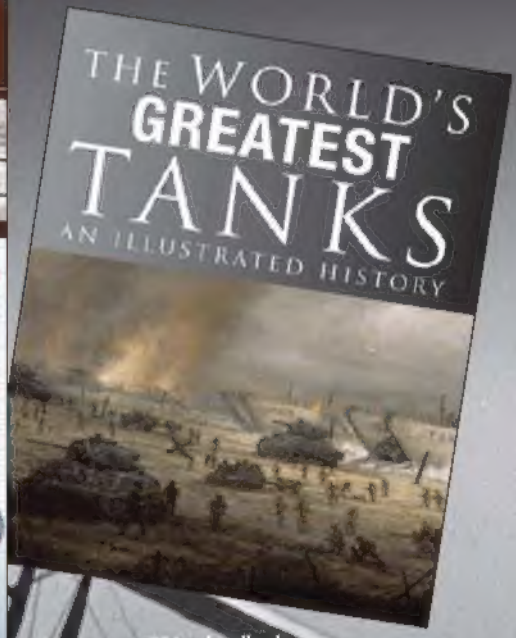

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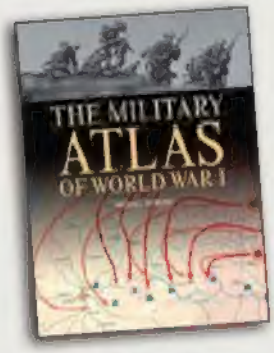

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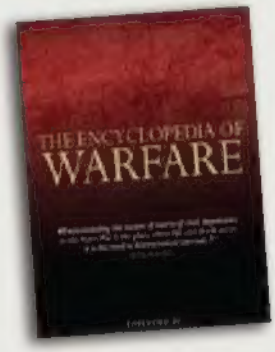

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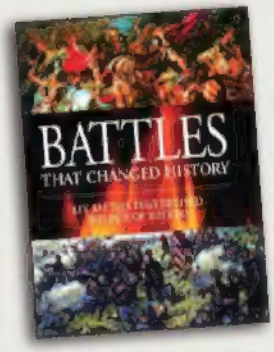

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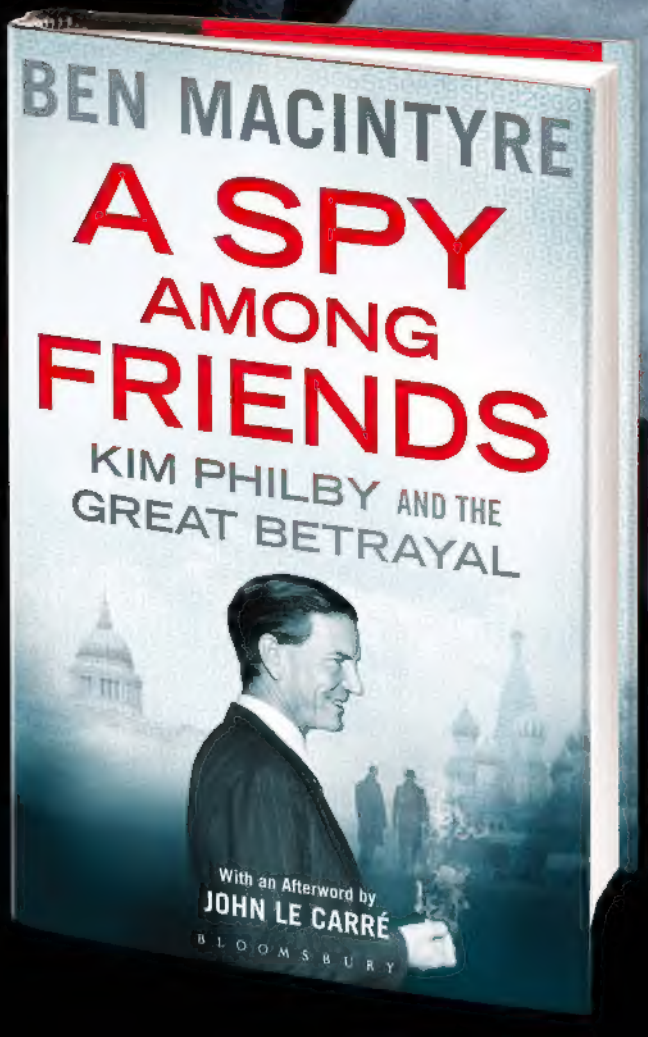

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